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THE FAITH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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THE FAITH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

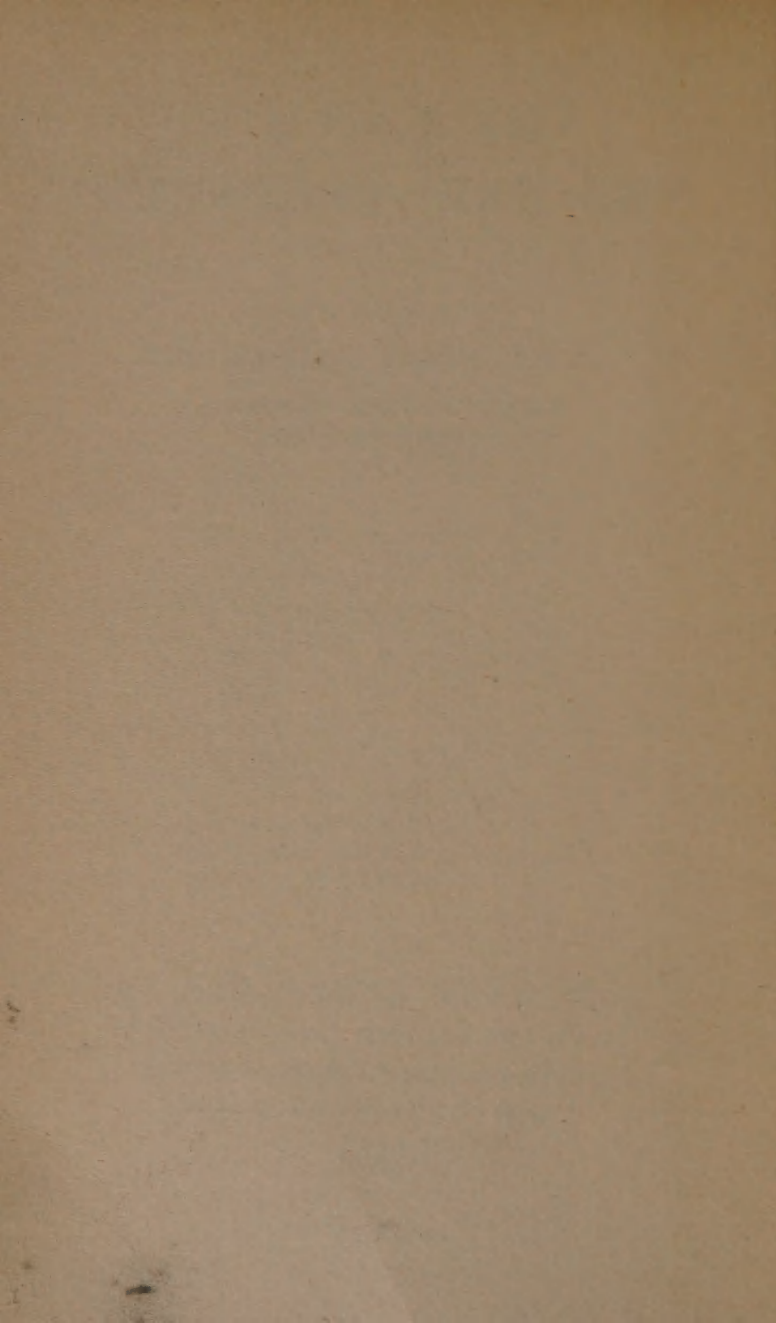
BY THE REV.
ALEXANDER NAIRNE, D.D.

Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, and
Canon of Chester Cathedral

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P R E F A C E

THIS book represents the Hulsean Lectures for 1919-20. The University of Cambridge expects much from those to whom the delivery of these lectures is entrusted. I have tried to be faithful to the trust, but know that I fall short of my desire, very far short of the duty as it really is : *det Deus humilitatem quam placatus inspiciat, accipiat confessionem ut peccata dimittat*. To Dr. Burkitt I owe much. He is not responsible for anything I say, but he has saved me from saying some foolish things. Mr. G. M. Edwards has helped me by counsel and criticism and by his fraternal interest in the book and in preliminary studies for it. I cannot thank Messrs. Longmans enough for their frequent advice and for the exceeding kindness with which they have more than once excused delay and broken promise. And my obligations to Messrs. Constable, their careful reader and skilful compositors, grew daily while the book passed through the press.

The book was begun before my appointment to the lectureship. Hence it is not a mere expansion of the lectures. The first four chapters correspond with the four Hulsean Lectures, and I have kept the titles which I owe to the imaginative skill of Sir Arthur Quiller Couch who with his unfailing good will—too often abused by needy brains—listened and talked and struck out the phrases. But the lectures (to be heard

in church) were very different from the chapters. Some passages do not reappear in the book. One of these however I print here for it sets forth the main problem which has been continually in my mind. It formed the conclusion of the first lecture: the quotation is from an address by the Master of Jesus College, given in the College Chapel at the commemoration of the Founder, Bishop Alcock, on Sunday, October 19, 1919:

‘A few weeks ago I listened in a College Chapel to this modern hope, this call to hope to-day though many an earlier hope had been disappointed. To-day, the preacher said, we are learning new reverence, reverence towards God and towards men: “And reverence for creeds we do not share. We shall slight no man for his nonconformity. We are passing beyond form and dogma. We look back — back beyond reformation, beyond councils of the church, beyond the doctors, beyond the great figure of Paul himself, and in the simple Gospel that was preached and understood in Galilee we shall find a peace where all our warring sects may rest.”

And surely that might very rightly be. To believe what Jesus Christ taught and to be like him, that is the narrow and blessed way of the Gospel. Who dare add lesser tests to that supreme one?

But can we rest there? When I hear my friend speak like that I am convinced and would ask no further questions, content to believe the simple Gospel which was preached and understood in Galilee. It seems that the Galilean disciples could not be thus content. Their Lord claimed nothing for himself. They found themselves constrained to render all to him because they found that from him they drew all. No one of

set purpose developed doctrine. Life went on; first by his side in Galilee, then with his Spirit guiding them in many climes: and as life went on they learned more certainly that he was the fount of all their living, the light of all their seeing, their Saviour. My Lord and my God: they could not but say it. But if they said it, they must say it reverently and honestly: they could not but learn theology.'

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I

THE GALILEAN GOSPEL : THE KINGDOM OF GOD : THE SON OF MAN

THE faith of the New Testament is the faith of the creeds, the Apostles' and the Nicene, which, roughly speaking, do express to-day the mind of 'all faithful people.' In all periods the creeds have been explained and tested by Scripture: they have been framed, discussed, preserved as true summaries of the Scripture doctrine.

But in the New Testament we find this faith by parts: we perceive it emerging, growing, coming together. The faith of the New Testament develops like the faith of the Old Testament, which it takes up and continues. As the prophets built up the faith for Israel, contributing severally their portion of the truth, so is it with the writers of the New Testament. In the creeds we have a general view: in the New Testament we distinguish aspects and stages.

Again, in the New Testament we have the living whole of which the creeds are abstracts or schemes. The New Testament stands to the creeds as nature to art. The character of nature is abundance: art represents by selection, expresses by symbol. Is the selection really representative? Has the symbol become merely a convention? By such questions we try art, and questions of that kind are asked about the creeds to-day. The artist must return continually to nature, the churchman to Scripture.

But especially to the New Testament; for the return is through the written word to the person of Jesus

Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared at a certain time on the scene of history. The faith springs out of history. The testing, purifying, deepening of faith always includes historical study. Such study requires the testing of tradition by documents, and in this case the documents are the New Testament.

But what is all this to a man who fears God? We have the faith: why disturb it?

Sooner or later we know ourselves to be sinners, then we desire to know whether our Lord really saves from sin. To some this knowledge comes in a flash: yet not always even to them without supervening doubt. And to others it does not so come. These—it is an apostolic rule—search the Scriptures, as we are now to do. The search must be honest and diligent. We must distinguish what is clear from what is dim. And in the clear things we must be accurate. We must proceed by method, not by leaps and bounds, by guess or prejudice. An axiom of such method in historical inquiry is that documents which preserve contemporary witness are first to be attended to. Hence we arrange the New Testament in chronological order.

So arranged the Epistles of S. Paul come first. The epistles to the Ephesians and the Philippians, to the Colossians and Philemon, seem to bear their date upon them—from the captivity at Rome. At any rate the epistles of the missionary period do—Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, Romans. These six were written between A.D. 50 and 60, when as yet our Gospels were not. And from these six alone we can make out almost the whole of the large faith of S. Paul. Yet we soon find it to be a faith which needs preliminary explanation. Who is the Christ whom this new-born Pharisee proclaims?¹

¹ There is no better introduction to the faith of the New Testament by way of S. Paul than Dr. E. A. Abbott's *Silanus the Christian* (A. & C. Black, 1906). It is a romance of critical theology, the story of a young Roman noble, a pupil of Epictetus, who after much exercise of mind and conscience becomes a Christian. It can be read many times with increasing enjoyment. Dr. Moffatt's *Historical New Testament*

One who is Son of God ; foretold by prophets ; ‘ born of the seed of David according to the flesh,’ which phrase (Rom. i. 3) implies the eternal pre-existence explicitly confessed in the epistles of the captivity ; crucified for the salvation of all men, for the redemption of all creation ; raised from the dead ; now in heaven ; to come at the great day with his saints ; his Spirit is in his faithful ones, the brethren ; thereby even now they dwell with him, for they are ‘ in Christ,’ his death, his life are theirs (Gal. ii. 20) ; he is Lord of the living and the dead ; through him we fall asleep and are quickened ; to die is to be at home with him (2 Cor. v. 8) ; he with the Holy Spirit is in the trinity of Godhead.

That is the Christ of S. Paul, and he is Jesus. He lived, a man, on earth, but Paul says little about that earthly life. What was it ? Has Paul transfigured real history ?

For answer we turn to our Gospels ; first to read the story ; then to test its trustworthiness by its own verisimilitude and consistency, and by comparing early tradition about the composition of these writings. First read the story. Read each Gospel through, not chapter by chapter, but in large draughts or, better still, a whole Gospel at a time. For here is a story which, if we could now read it for the first time, would seize attention, rouse expectation, move us to the heart. Few can come to it quite fresh like that. But many can recover the lost freshness by reading it without the long-used habits and conventions. And the result will be a strong sense of reality. Once roused it is hardly possible that this should die away again, however

(T. & T. Clark, 1901) conducts the student by the same road. Dr. Moffatt gives in this book a New Testament in a version of his own arranged in chronological order. He gives also a fresh vigorous introduction, and a series of very useful tables to elucidate the course of events, their relation to the literature, the growth of the canon, etc. His later *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (T. & T. Clark, 1911 ; new ed., 1917) is maturer work, but not so friendly and stimulating a companion.

tedious, however embarrassing detailed study or the doubts of criticism may prove. Nor need there be any misgiving as though we were allowing judgement to be biassed from the first, for this is just the natural way to start. Harmonies of the four narratives, schemes of chronology, concentration on the problem of miracles, and so on, do wear away the impression of reality: so do dogmatic and didactic interests, even the presupposition that we ought to read in a devotional frame of mind. We are likely to be stirred to a deeper reverence than we ever knew before if we can begin by laying aside even that presupposition and reading with simplicity, immersing our whole mind in the story.

Of course we shall recognise that each evangelist tells the story with marked peculiarity. That is one of the things which will make their narratives ring true. We can hardly measure the gain it has been to the church that the Gospels have been preserved separately, and not in a harmony; as for a good while the Syriac-speaking churches did read them.¹ In a harmony personal impressions are lost; contradictions are smoothed away, artificially if not violently; and with the contradictions the abundance of real life goes: in Jesus Christ himself, not in a formal harmony of the four Gospel narratives, all contradictions are reconciled.

Yet harmonies have a use for students, and it was natural that harmonising should be the prelude to criticism. Nor was it less natural that when a harmony was desired, the Gospel according to S. John should be chosen for the basis. For that Gospel begins like the other three in Galilee, but goes on to tell of a ministry

¹ In the *Diatessaron* compiled by Tatian, an Assyrian Christian, about A.D. 170. An Arabic translation of the whole work was edited by Ciasca in 1888. Before that it was partly known from an Armenian version of Ephraem the Syrian's commentary upon it. *The Diatessaron of Tatian*, edited by S. Hemphill (1880), gives a good idea of this 'Harmony of Four' to English readers. See Kenyon's *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, pp. 148 ff.

in Jerusalem, extending the one year of the Galilean Gospels to three. In S. John too the Godhead of the Lord is more directly displayed than in the Galilean or synoptic Gospels, and that would seem to make it the proper groundwork to which the less explicit narratives should be applied. Yet it was impossible that the fourth Gospel should remain in this position. The correspondencies were seen to be dimmed by variations; the order of events was not the same in the one Gospel as in the three; this very insistence on the Godhead of the Christ seemed to remove it from the three in time and place; they stood near the beginning, this was a retrospect from further off.

That is indeed in accord with the tradition of the second century, that S. John wrote the Gospel in extreme old age at Ephesus, a 'spiritual' Gospel to fill up what the earlier evangelists had left unsaid.¹ And the tradition was little questioned while the divinity of the Lord Jesus was received as a dogma which required no further explication. But when in the eighteenth century men began to ask crudely whether the dogma was true, or reverently what did it in truth imply, then the spirit of criticism awoke, and the evidence for the apostle's authorship was examined and found unconvincing. The result was that the fourth Gospel was put aside as being the expression of the mind of the church, or of some part of the church in the second century, but as having no historical value for the student of origins. So it was to remain till a larger view of its theology and a closer acquaintance with first-century thought and circumstance should reinstate it as a peculiar but most important influence in the final developement of the faith of the apostolic age, and as also reflecting light on the earliest origins.

Meanwhile the searchers were left with the three first Gospels to work with. We can see now, as we look

¹ Clement of Alexandria in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, vi. 14; cf. iii. 24.

back, that these men were no triflers, pedants, or destroyers. They were searching for the pearl of price, and for that were bold to sell all that they had so long enjoyed. Their earnestness was a source of weakness as well as of strength. When they at first chose Matthew as the earliest Gospel, they did so with literary reasons: Luke tells how he used earlier narratives, Mark read like an epitome. But Matthew is the Gospel of the sermon on the mount, the Gospel of the teaching of Christ. And teaching was what that generation above all believed in. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away' seemed the very clue to the maze. Miracles could be no test of heart-religion. Jewish picture language about the kingdom of heaven might be set aside as the embroidery of those who told the tale. In the words of the Master they felt the air of eternity. The Gospel according to S. Matthew, freed from excrescences, gave the very Christ on whom men might still believe and be saved.

Swift sketching of that kind takes the fancy, but soon the intellect insists on detail and accuracy. Stricter and more literary tests were applied. Mark was found to be almost wholly included in Matthew and Luke. And not only did Mark supply the framework of the common narrative, but Mark's very words were repeated, and when altered the reason for the alteration was commonly apparent. The oral theory, that the Gospels had taken fixed form in catechetical instruction,¹ no more covered all the facts observed than

¹ This theory was defended by Dr. Arthur Wright in *The Composition of the Four Gospels* (Macmillan, 1890), a little book which breathes the fresh air of the sea voyage during which it was written. Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (Macmillan, 1st ed., 1872) was also governed by the oral theory. But though that theory has proved insufficient, Westcott's *Introduction* is still very useful. Apart from its originality, the collection of ancient authority, the conscientious presentation of the testimonies in scholarly shape, is of great value. Solid honesty and diligence, considered judgement, devotion to truth unadorned, renders Dr. Stanton's *The Gospels as Historical Documents* (Cambridge University Press, 2 vols., 1903,

did the simple preference for John or Matthew. The oral was drawn further back beyond the literary process. Something even more trustworthy seemed to be offered to the inquirer. The preface to Luke shews his use of written material. Our written Mark was part, and the chief part, of that material. If so, our written Mark might itself be far earlier than critics had dared to put a written Gospel. Let it be read again more sympathetically, and let it be seen whether it bear the stamp of primitive simplicity.

Fresh reading showed that it did. Mark is not in the style of an epitome. Much is wanting in Mark which the other Gospels have, but what is in Mark is vigorous and detailed. Again, Mark is naïve. He tells how in the synagogue our Lord 'looked round about on them with anger' (iii. 5). In Matthew and Luke this is omitted, and the omission is typical of the more reflective reverence for the Lord's perfect character which the two later Gospels display. But let us look at Mark now for ourselves; read the story through; and put down the impression it leaves upon us.

After a brief title, Here beginneth the good tidings of Jesus Christ, the scene opens suddenly in the wilderness of Judaea. John preaches the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins; proclaims the coming of One mightier than himself; and from Nazareth Jesus comes, and receiving baptism, is assured by sign and word, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.'

Thus the ministry of the Lord (i. 9—xiii.) begins. Driven by the Spirit (who had descended upon him at baptism) into the wilderness, he undergoes the temptation: then comes into Galilee preaching the good

1909), a fine work, the worth of which is more appreciated as the reader becomes more sincere in his own search for truth. Dr. Burkitt's *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (T. & T. Clark, 1906), a more vivacious introduction, must not however be neglected on that account; no sensible student would neglect anything Dr. Burkitt offers him. Very good is Dr. Armitage Robinson's *The Study of the Gospels* in Longmans' *Handbooks for the Clergy*.

tidings of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand—a very startling announcement which in this Gospel the Baptist has not made.

Simon, Andrew, James, and John are called. Works of healing follow at Capernaum. The Lord retires for prayer: then goes through Galilee preaching in the synagogues and casting out devils. More works of healing; fame spreads: the crowds which in this Gospel never cease to surround the Lord, are more and more enthusiastic: he begins to speak of the 'Son of man,' a title of half-veiled import, who has power on earth to forgive sins, is Lord of the sabbath: Levi is called: there is a dispute with the scribes and Pharisees. Then comes a check. The man with a withered hand being healed on the sabbath day, Pharisees and Herodians took counsel how they might destroy him, and only once again in this Gospel, in his own country (vi. 1), does the Lord teach in a synagogue. Being in fact put out of the synagogue he takes new measures: teaches and heals by the seaside (where the spirits hail him as Son of God); appoints his twelve apostles to attend his steps and to go forth as missionaries (the Latin term which corresponds to the Greek 'apostle'); rebukes the Pharisees; enlarges the ties of kindred to include all who do the will of God; proclaims the kingdom by parables, with private interpretation to his own disciples; stills the storm, casts out the legion of devils from a man and lets them enter the herd of swine; cures a woman, raises the child of Jairus—'The child is not dead, he said, but sleepeth'; then follows a visit to his own country where 'he could do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.' The twelve receive authority over unclean spirits and are sent forth preaching repentance, and casting out devils and anointing and healing many that were sick.

Then a narrative of the beheading of John the

Baptist closes this first act of the drama (vi. 14-29). It is introduced to explain Herod's belief that John had risen from the dead, 'and therefore do these powers work in him.' Others were saying, 'It is Elijah'; others, 'It is a prophet even as one of the prophets.'

The second stage of the ministry begins with the feeding of the five thousand (vi. 30 ff.); then there is a dispute with the Pharisees and certain scribes from Jerusalem, or rather an authoritative utterance to them, about tradition and true purity; more works of healing mind or body; and the feeding of the four thousand, with a short conversation with the disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. This division culminates in S. Peter's confession, 'Thou art the Christ,' when they were in 'the villages of Caesarea Philippi,' for in this Gospel the Lord enters no Greek city. That confession leads at once to a prediction of the passion, death, and rising again of the Son of man, made like the confession of S. Peter, in the privacy of the Lord with his disciples. But the private prediction is immediately followed by a summons to the multitude and the disciples together: 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for the sake of me and of the good tidings shall save it.' Then comes the transfiguration, the healing of the epileptic boy—'Thou dumb and deaf spirit I command thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.' And then, with a second prediction of death and resurrection, the journey to Jerusalem begins. The ambition of the twelve is corrected by the example of the little child. The journey continues not by the direct route but through the borders of Judaea and beyond Jordan: that way, it would seem, was safest, and there were to be no needless risks to hinder the consummation of the great purpose. The little children are blessed. The rich young man gives occasion for one more revelation of

the difficulty and the glory of entering the kingdom, of which in these paragraphs we seem to feel the near and nearer imminence. And then there is a break in the sequence, a moment's silence in the narration.

We start once more with this vivid picture: 'And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid' (x. 32). The third prediction of the passion and resurrection is at once added; then the answer to the sons of Zebedee, 'The cup that I drink ye shall drink, etc.,' and the saying which springs from it, 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many,' draw us into the movement we are watching; we feel the same awe as felt the actors in the scene, the sense of will and destiny and a storm of spiritual force gathering rapidly on the horizon.

They pass on through Jericho: blind Bartimaeus hails the Lord as 'Jesus thou son of David': Bethany and the Mount of Olives are reached: the colt is fetched, and the Lord rides into Jerusalem, 'and they that went before, and they that followed, cried, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David: Hosanna in the highest.' What enthusiasm, what joy. It is the sequel to the opening proclamation, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand'; only then the Lord had repeated the 'Repent ye' of the Baptist, and to us who know of Peter's confession, and the stern purpose and sad predictions which succeeded it, there is tragic irony in the joy.

And the anticipation of tragedy grows steadily. The last stage of the ministry has now begun, the ministry in Jerusalem. Every act and word points to the approach indeed of the kingdom, but through enmity, violence and death. The temple is cleansed, the fig-tree cursed, authority assumed, and by the decision about the tribute-money the support of the

Zealots is lost, the Lord, it almost seems, deliberately chooses desertion and death. Yet still he teaches, answering even captious questions with profound simplicity which abashes the questioner, till the discreet answer of the scribe, who was not far from the kingdom of God, gives opportunity for cutting further discussion short: 'No man after that durst ask him any question.' The Lord himself sets a problem about 'the Christ' which confused and still confuses materialists and conventionalists, while still 'the great multitude heard him gladly.' Then, as before he had found refreshment in children, so now the chapter of controversy ends sweetly with the poor widow and her generosity. A strange discourse about the great day, when men shall 'see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory,' closes the section. It is spoken to the disciples who had heard S. Peter's confession. It springs out of a question of theirs which makes us think of the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But whereas in Matthew, and quite plainly in Luke, this discourse partly depicts the fall of Jerusalem, in Mark there is hardly a line that need be explained thus. And it runs out into the paradox: 'Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father'; and then closes with the command to watch.

Thus ends the threefold ministry, in Galilee before, in Galilee after the feeding of the five thousand, in Jerusalem. With chapter xiv. the third and last division of the Gospel begins, the passion, crucifixion, and resurrection.

After two days was the passover: the chief priests and scribes sought to take and kill the Lord. He is anointed as for death in the house of Simon the leper. Judas Iscariot goes to the chief priests and promises to deliver him to them. On the first day of unleavened

bread the disciples make ready the passover in a large upper room to which the Lord directed them. In the evening he eats the passover with the twelve, speaks to them of his betrayal, takes the bread and the cup with the words, 'This is my body. . . This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.' The hymn is sung. Peter is warned. In Gethsemane Peter and James and John are bid to watch while the Lord 'greatly amazed and sore troubled' prays, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit, not what I will, but what thou wilt.' The three watchers sleep, and the men sent with Judas from the chief priests, scribes and elders take our Lord. All this is told concisely, yet with much detail. Then comes the trial before the high priest with Peter's denial, the failure of the false witnesses, and the answer of our Lord to the question of the high priest: 'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?' And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.' At last, with the strange correction of traditional messianic terms to 'Son of man,' the Lord's acceptance of S. Peter's confession is made public, and his condemnation ensues. In the morning after a consultation of the council or sanhedrin, the Lord is delivered to Pilate. Pilate asks the political question, 'Art thou the king of the Jews?' 'Thou sayest,' answered the Lord, and 'no more answered anything.' Pilate tries to bring about the release of the Lord, but is obliged to release Barabbas and to deliver Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. The soldiers mock the king of the Jews, and impressing Simon of Cyrene to bear the cross, crucify the Lord in the place Golgotha, with two robbers, one on either side, and the superscription on his own cross, 'The king of the Jews.' At the third hour he was crucified, having refused the stupefying

wine mingled with myrrh. From the sixth hour to the ninth there was darkness. 'At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' Then with one more loud cry he gave up the ghost. And the centurion said, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.' Women were beholding from afar, and two of them in the evening beheld the rock-hewn tomb wherein the body was laid by Joseph of Arimathea, 'a councillor of honourable estate, who also himself was looking for the kingdom of God.'

That was in the evening, the day before the sabbath. When the sabbath was past, very early on the first day of the week, the same two Maries who had beheld the tomb, went with one more woman, Salome, with spices to the tomb, and arriving when the sun was risen found the stone rolled back, and entering into the tomb saw a young man sitting there arrayed in a white robe, and they were amazed. 'And he saith unto them, Be not amazed: ye seek Jesus the Nazarene, which hath been crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him! But go, tell his disciples and Peter, He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out, and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them: and they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid.'

This account of S. Mark's Gospel has increased in fulness as it went on. It began as a terse summary. At the end the present tenses have given way to proper narrative diction, and more and more has been repeated in the very phrases of the original. Let the reader set himself the same task, and see whether he does not slip into a like change. The cause is the gathering sense of reality, an impression which becomes overpowering as the last chapters are reached. The last twelve verses of our Authorised Version (kept, but separated, in the Revised) are an addition, one of alternative and varying conclusions that have been supplied to what seemed an imperfect narrative. Imperfect it may be.

The generally accepted explanation is that the original manuscript, or at least the archetype of all existing copies, had been mutilated by some accident. But there is a remarkable fitness in the abrupt close. The two last words in particular are so much in the spirit of the whole, in which the awe surrounding the Lord is continually felt. So at the transfiguration S. Peter's words are not the impetuosity of our conventional explanation, but 'he wist not what to answer; for they became sore afraid.' And whether or no the abrupt close adds to the effect of the whole account of the visit to the tomb, is there not something very primitive and real in the reticence which leaves a multitude of curious questions we would fain put unanswered, yet satisfies because it preserves the proper mystery of the ineffable wonder? It is argued that something must be lost, because S. Mark would never have omitted that definite evidence for and sequel to the resurrection which all the other evangelists one way or another give. But read Mark straight through, and consider whether any addition would leave so strong an assurance on the imagination as does this broken splendour, this transient, but unforgettable flash of light.

There is a like reticence and mystery about the person of our Lord. Mystery in the proper sense: not a dimness into which the mind cannot penetrate at all, a riddle to be received and let alone; but a wonder which leads us on and on and still extends beyond our ken, a starting point from the visible to the eternal. The portrait is an etching in which the lines are distinct and beautiful in themselves, but have a further suggestion and inexhaustibly stimulate the inner eye. A conspicuous instance is the use of the title 'Son of man.' This is only used by our Lord. He says the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (ii. 10); is Lord even of the sabbath (ii. 28); must suffer, die, and after three days rise again (viii. 31, ix. 31, x. 33 f.); shall come in clouds

with power and glory (xiii. 26); he goeth as it is written of him and is betrayed (xiv. 21); shall be seen sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven (xiv. 62). Does our Lord simply mean 'myself' when he speaks thus? From S. Matthew's Gospel we are perhaps habituated to think so, especially if we read it in the late text or in our Authorised Version. Thus at the confession of S. Peter, Mark's 'Who do men say that I am?' becomes in Matthew 'Who do men say that the Son of man is?' or, in the later text, 'that I, the Son of man, am.' And the comparison of Mark, Luke, and Matthew on the sin against the Holy Ghost compels us to reflection. Mark has:—

'Verily I say unto you, All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness but is guilty of an eternal sin' (iii. 28 f.).

Luke has:—

'Every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven' (xii. 10).

Matthew carries definition farther in every direction:—

'Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come' (xii. 31 ff.).

Keeping to S. Mark, are there any passages in which 'Son of man' is simply equivalent to 'myself'? Concerning the sabbath, our Lord seems to explain his

own meaning by 'the sabbath was made for man.' 'Son of man' might well be taken as in Psalm viii. and elsewhere in the Old Testament as the ordinary Hebrew expression for 'man in general.' Yet the addition 'So that the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath' does add something, but something complex. No simple 'claim' is here, but an enrichment of the idea of the Christ, and of the incarnation. So in the passage about forgiving sins. So again (when our thought has been thus prepared) in the Lord's answer to the high priest. He alluded to a well-known passage in Daniel. It was therefore a messianic declaration. But in Daniel this 'Son of man' is explained as representing no one person by himself but the whole company of the saints, and we shall see, when we come to study S. Paul, that this conception of the 'inclusive' Christ was part of his Jewish inheritance and of his Christian theology. So again in the predictions of the passion and resurrection. Here there seems to be an allusion to another prophetic passage in the Old Testament, Hosea vi. 2 f. If so it would seem that our Lord is speaking of something wider than his own death and resurrection. He is thinking of its results, for his people, or even for mankind. These predictions and the word in x. 45, 'For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many,' are commentaries upon one another.¹

This is an example, which may be proved typical by any reader for himself, of a naïve faithfulness in Mark. He gives no explanations. He sometimes observes,

¹ Dr. Abbott has written a large book on *The Son of Man*. His smaller preparatory volume, *The Message of the Son of Man* (A. & C. Black, 1909), is perhaps even more instructive, at least to those who do not care for laborious detail. Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, pp. 235-267 (English translation by D. M. Kay: T. & T. Clark, 1902), should also be consulted. Dalman thinks that the original Aramaic expression, which our Lord must have used, had a definite messianic reference, including a half-veiled reference to the suffering and death of the Messiah. Dalman's authority is weighty but many scholars disagree with him.

and oftener shows unconsciously, how unable the disciples were to understand our Lord, and especially the twelve to whom he imparted his deeper ideas. Matthew and Luke by reflection bring out something of the meaning which Mark leaves unexpressed. Yet it sometimes happens that Mark by his very simplicity preserves some far-reaching turn of expression which Matthew and Luke, by their play of later thought, obscure.¹ From one point of view after another the earliness of Mark's narrative is approved; and in very many respects the great value of this early witness impresses us.

It was, however, the plain fact of Mark being verbally contained in Matthew and Luke which first compelled assent to Mark's priority. And the immediate result was the embarrassment of the old-fashioned critics. They had been led by their studies hitherto to expect the primitive Gospel to portray Christ as a teacher, a reformer, with little of the, to him already obsolete, Judæan crudeness. Miracles too had been a stumbling block, and it seemed possible to remove the puerile romance of the miraculous from the original grandeur of the history.

But if Mark presents the Gospel in its earliest form all this must be reconsidered. For in Mark there is little teaching, and the matter of the narrative consists of the wonderful works of the Lord. Mark is confined within the limits of Judaism: our Lord scarce seems to think of those outside Israel. The healing of the Syrophoenician's daughter is a special case and proves the rule; the healing of the centurion's servant is not recorded by S. Mark. And the Jewish expectation of the kingdom of God is the spirit which breathes form into this Gospel from first to last. According to S.

¹ This is brought out with large elaboration by Dr. Abbott in *The Fourfold Gospel* (Cambridge University Press, 4 vols., 1914-1917). His idea is that John often 'intervenes' to restore Mark's original observation, to which, however, he gives a spiritual, almost allegoric turn in many instances. The gist of the four large volumes is readably given in the smaller *Introduction* of 1913.

Mark the essence of the Gospel is not Jesus with a universal doctrine of the fatherhood of God, but Jesus as the Christ who brings the kingdom of God.

Review the story. John baptising unto repentance. Jesus baptised receives the Spirit as Son of God. He proclaims the kingdom at hand; the long expected, he has authority to say, is coming now. He calls on his people to repent and enter the kingdom. Crowds attend him, regarding him with awe. He heals and works wonders and casts out devils. He corrects as with authority the accepted law of the sabbath, and incurs the opposition of the Pharisees, and can no more give his message in synagogues. He therefore chooses apostles, who attend him as a lord and master and are sent forth by him to spread abroad his good tidings—the good tidings of the kingdom at hand, that is ‘the gospel.’ The enthusiasm of the multitude is kept in check. The very proclamation of the kingdom is veiled in parables. He suffers none to call him the Christ. Yet the truth cannot be hid. Compare the feeding of the five thousand and the feeding of the four thousand with the last supper. We all recognise their affinity with one another and with our Holy Communion. But S. John recognised the sacrament of the kingdom in that enthusiastic feast of the expectant saints (John vi.). The people were for making our Lord their king. Yet that was not the way this Christ was learning his royal obedience (cf. Heb. v. 8). To his apostolic followers he imparts at last the assurance of his Christship, and sets his face towards Jerusalem that the kingdom may be inaugurated by his death—and rising again. To Jerusalem he goes. The twelve themselves fail in sympathy, and cannot receive this tragic and far-reaching reformation of the ancient hope. Bartimaeus and the multitude break out with their exultant all but certainty of anticipation. Judas tells what secret to the priests? At the last supper the Lord concentrates all the mystery of his divine consciousness into sacramental acts and

words which end with 'Next time in the kingdom.' Before the high priest he refuses not his tremendous title, and as the Christ he is crucified. With 'Eloi, Eloi,' the deepest awfulness of tragedy is touched. It almost seems as though the Lord passed to the kingdom and might not see it come, while the centurion did see it: in such strange manner Mark transcends, as though unconsciously, the narrow boundary of this primitive Judæan Gospel. And on the third day the young man in white array declared that the promise was fulfilled: Jesus the Nazarene had risen from the dead.

Limitations and immensities. A Son of man, friend of Galilean fishermen, moving among the simple multitude, yet never quite one of them, awfully revered, working wonders, hailed as the Son of God at the beginning and end of the story, confessed as the Christ, bringing the kingdom, yet by a shameful death and with a dreadful cry of desolation; and yet again rising on the third day. We can in part understand this better than the critics of the early nineteenth century. For us the strange world of late Jewish apocalypses has been explored. We know, as they did not, how minds in Judæa, and still more in Galilee, were seething with expectation; expectation of the kingdom, of a Christ, a Christ who should be at least in some remarkable sense divine, who would by some notable act of divine power 'restore the kingdom to Israel.'

Apocalypse is the Greek term corresponding to the Latin revelation. It means the 'unveiling' of the future, of the Day of the Lord, concerning which the great prophets had spoken. To these prophets, Isaiah and the rest, the Day seems to have been revealed as the happy holy time which would follow the judgement each of them saw coming on their people, through Assyrian or Babylonian invasion. And to them the Christ (Greek for Messiah, the LORD's Anointed) seems to have been the king of David's line who would reign

righteously, filled with the Spirit of the LORD, in that near future of blessedness. So on the whole it seems. Yet those canonical prophets were inspired if ever men have been, and it is rash to define the limit or the mode of their spiritual insight. And they inherited a religious tradition which has left its traces throughout the Old Testament and which, for better and sometimes perhaps for worse, went beyond what we might consider likely or reasonable. Isaiah himself was perhaps more apocalyptic, less soberly a statesman, than we have been ready to allow. Be that as it may, in the two centuries before the birth of our Lord, a new kind of prophecy arose, partly founded on the old. The book of Daniel is the best example. Daniel is not classed with 'The Prophets' in the Hebrew Bible. It stands in the later division, 'The Writings.' What that position implies is confirmed by its character. It professes to be written for a later age. It is a consolation to 'the saints,' not a warning to the rebellious nation. It veils history and prediction by curious symbolism. It is concerned with 'the last days' when the kingdom of God shall come, when authority in that kingdom shall be vested in a person, representing the saints of God but himself endued with supernatural, almost divine character; and in these last days there will be a resurrection of the dead for judgement.

This might be a rough epitome of a large number of books which were written during the two centuries before the birth of our Lord, and which continued to be written or rewritten for a century or more afterwards. Many of these are known to us in whole or part. The books of 'Enoch,' one of which is quoted in Jude 14, are the most famous. Another reference to the same class of literature is to be found in Jude 9. The words of the angel's message in Luke ii. 11, 'There is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord,' are almost exactly what we read in one of 'The Psalms of Solomon,' a collection of 'apocalyptic' pieces of like

kind. These apocalypses concentrate interest upon the kingdom, its coming in the last days by an act of God. This coming of the kingdom will be the end of the world—that is, of this present world order. This end will be the introduction of another, a holy happy order, which however is pictured in very various character. Sometimes, though by no means always, the Messiah—that is, the Anointed One or Christ—is expected to come as King. When this Christ appears in the apocalypses it is in a more personal and definite form than the older prophets had conceived; and in one passage in the Enoch books the Christ is clearly pre-existent and divine, the Son of God in heaven. Still it must be admitted that, so far as we have recovered the Jewish apocalyptic literature, God and the kingdom fill the scene more than the Christ does. But there is much variety in this respect as in others. The apocalyptic movement was a popular one. These books were to the people what our hymns are as compared with what the Bible is to us. They are vague and vivid; a world of devotion mingled with fancy; influential in the villages, and patronised by the Pharisees who were always on the side of popular developement in religion; coldly looked upon by the Sadducees, the priestly conservatives in Jerusalem the holy city. Our own popular notion of the ‘messianic hope’ among the Jews is more accordant with what we find in these apocalypses than with the Old Testament. The important question follows, whether this was also the idea of the evangelists and, still more important, of our Lord.

At any rate the apocalypses explain that fervour of expectation which is depicted in Luke iii. 15 ff.: ‘And as the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether it could be that he was the Christ; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall

baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, throughly to cleanse his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.' And they explain much in Mark: the interest of the multitude: their excitement suppressed, growing, breaking out at last into exultation at the entry into Jerusalem: the plan of the narrative so simple, so striking in its progress and its crises: the distinct reason for our Lord's condemnation and death; he claimed to be the Christ and was condemned for blasphemy. The apocalypses explain too the awe with which the Lord was regarded; the Christ was to be a divine person. And so, with perfect naturalness, Mark presents him as divine, doing marvellous works, speaking and acting with authority, knowing himself to have entered upon his ministry with an assurance from heaven that he was the Son of God, conscious of his coming passion and resurrection, conscious also of the redemption which he was thus to effect for 'many.' Accept Mark as true history, and the old difficulty of criticism, How could S. Paul's doctrine of the divine Christ grow out of the memory of the Galilean teacher? disappears. Some might doubt this earliest witness, but there is no room for doubting that he means to witness to a divine Christ from the first: whatever else Mark's Jesus Christ is or is not, he is certainly that.

On the other hand, does not a new difficulty arise? It is the freshness of Mark, the simplicity, the concentration within narrow Jewish limits which makes all this so plain. We must also quite honestly recognise these limits or we stultify the startling evidence we have gained. The Christ of Mark seems to contemplate no world-wide redemption: he is merely national. He proclaims with awful certainty the immediate coming of the kingdom. But did the kingdom come immediately? Was not his bitter cry upon the cross a cry of disappointment? Had not his own expectation been too like the expectation of his fellow-country-

men; not gross indeed, material, political, yet naïve as of some act of God which would be wrought evidently, at a moment, a wonderful work, the proper consummation of the wonders, the miracles, he had himself performed? And if so, what can we say but that he was mistaken? 'And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power' (ix. 1). Did any of those who heard these words ever see what the Lord promised by these words?

S. Mark is our earliest witness to 'the days of the flesh' of our Lord. But that is not to say that this Gospel was written earliest of the books of the New Testament. It is the earliest of our written Gospels; that can be proved by comparison with the other three: and it preserves more or less exactly the tradition of the Galilean apostles; that appears very highly probable from our examination of its contents according to the principles of historical criticism. Moreover, it agrees with the tradition that S. Mark was S. Peter's interpreter and wrote out in his Gospel the catechetical lessons he had heard from S. Peter. Mark's written Gospel is a perpetuation, so valuable because the writer seems so free from private cleverness, of the contemporary oral Gospel.¹ But the Gospels were coming into

¹ 'The earliest account of the origin of a "Gospel" is that which Papias has given on the authority of the Elder John (Euseb., *H. E.*, iii. 39). Papias was himself a "direct hearer" of this John, and John was a "disciple of the Lord" (if the text of Papias be correct), or at any rate contemporary with the later period of the apostolic age. "This also the Elder used to say. Mark having become Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately all that he remembered (*or* that he [Peter] mentioned); though he did not record in order that which was either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed Him; but subsequently attached himself to Peter, who used to frame his teaching to meet the wants of his hearers, but not as making a connected narrative of the Lord's discourses. So Mark committed no error, as he wrote down some particulars just as he recalled them to mind (*or* as he [Peter] narrated them). For he took heed to one thing, to omit none of the facts that he heard and to make no false statement in his

form and use side by side with the epistles of the New Testament. We shall presently see how the epistle to the Hebrews may with probability be dated very nearly when the written Mark appeared, and how Hebrews shows one way in which this very difficulty about the limitations of our Lord's manhood and environment were met by the church at a period when newly awakened interest in 'the days of his flesh' intensified the 'scandal of the cross' and of the whole 'humiliation' of the Lord. We may so far anticipate the apostolic teaching on this point as to notice that real manhood necessarily carries with it real limitations, that all limitation is also opportunity, that (as we shall presently see in discussing our Lord's teaching) the absolute and universal ideals of our Lord's moral precepts may have received their perfect form from the very simplicity of his expectation of the kingdom, and that it is only through frank recognition of his real manhood that we can apprehend his real Godhead.

But when so much has been allowed there still remain other considerations: and this first. The 'apocalyptic' view of the early Gospel was brought into prominence some years ago by a brilliant book called

account of them." This important testimony notices the three points . . . the historic character of the oral Gospel, the special purpose with which it was framed, and the fragmentariness of its contents; and it was on such an oral basis that our present Gospel of St. Mark is said to have been founded, according to the evidence of one who must have known the apostles' (Westcott, *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, c. III. ii. 1, a). Dom Chapman shows how probable it is that the text of Papias is correct, and that by the Elder John he meant the Apostle; cf. p. 171.

F. H. Colson shows that 'in order' may have a technical significance, 'according to the approved arrangement of the rhetorician' (*Journal of Theological Studies*, October 1912).

It will be observed by a reader of S. Mark that there is hardly anything in this Gospel which might not have been seen or heard by one of the Twelve. The voice heard by our Lord at the baptism, the very brief notice of the temptation in the wilderness, may have been told them by the Lord himself. The events of the Passion after S. Peter's denial are different, but even without having recourse to the Fourth Gospel, it is not difficult to imagine means through which these would at once have been learned by the disciples.

Von Reimarus zu Wrede by Albert Schweitzer.¹ In Germany the older criticism, represented by such weighty names as Harnack's, held its own, and Schweitzer's book gained far less attention than it did in England. In England it really did inaugurate a new start in gospel criticism. It seemed to liberate an impulse, already working, towards a larger and more generous philosophy than rationalising methods could satisfy. A host of books articles lectures appeared popularising opposing developing, sometimes picking and choosing between what was acceptable and what was embarrassing to traditional faith; but on the whole the new idea dominated, that the first beginning of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ was intensely but narrowly apocalyptic.

The pity was that attention was concentrated too much on the new book about the gospel, whereas it would have been fairer to Schweitzer himself to have followed his lead by reading the Gospels again for ourselves without the sophisticated literary prejudices which had gathered about them. He threw off a sketch, we turned it into a system. The great thing he shewed was that it is always wiser to read the Gospels as they stand, see what they really say, consider whether the startling parts of them may not prove, when we recover the environment, the essential parts; and to be suspicious of critical manipulation of

¹ *Von Reimarus zu Wrede, eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-forschung* (Tübingen, 1906). Schweitzer describes the attempts to write a life of our Lord from the publication of the tracts of H. S. Reimarus by Lessing in 1778 to Professor Wrede's *Messiah-Secret* in 1901. He shows that the eschatological clue, indicated by Reimarus and afterwards lost, has at last been recovered. An English translation was published with the title *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* in 1910.

The best introduction to the subject is Dr. Burkitt's little book *The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus* (Boston and New York; and The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1910). See also Dr. Burkitt's essay on 'The Eschatological Idea in the Gospel' in *Cambridge Biblical Essays* (Macmillan, 1909); Dr. Sanday's *The Life of Christ in Recent Research* (Oxford, 1907), and *Christologies Ancient and Modern* (Oxford, 1910); and Loisy's *Jésus et la Tradition évangélique* (Paris, 1910).

the text. That is a very different principle from taking just what is given and asking no questions; it is the recommendation for scientific criticism of patience with courage, and of continual revivifying of convention by going back from commentary to original, from art to nature. Now do this with the Gospel according to S. Mark. Forget Schweitzer, and the rationalists, and the traditionalists alike. What is your own impression? Certainly the idea of the kingdom governs the whole. As certainly the death and rising from death of the Lord is the culmination and completion of the whole. That culmination was astonishing to every one. Here a new force breaks in on the Judaic tradition, a force of such far promising consequences that 'narrowness' is the last quality to predicate of this surprising drama. The roots of the Gospel run deep into Judaic history, but the Gospel itself inaugurates a new era.

Again, the Christ in Mark is evidently and really a man, evidently and really a Galilean moving among Galileans. He is hemmed in by strictest human limitations. But, as we have already seen, this Gospel arrests our thought from the first, and more and more as it proceeds, by indicating the more than human wonder of the words and acts of this man who is the expected Christ. It arrests and baffles us; for it is by itself an imperfect Gospel. It has indeed the pregnant imperfection of a sketch. It fires imagination. We long to know what being Christ meant to this Christ. And so far as this Gospel does help us to an answer, it surely compels us at every step to suspect that he had a very different conception of Christhood, of divine Sonship, of the needs of man and God's design to meet these needs, of the 'ransom for many,' from what the Galileans round him, even the disciples had. The difficulty, if the word may be excused, the improbability of our dogma of the Incarnation must sometimes occur even to a devout mind. How can it correspond to the immensity of truth and life in God? The answer is that the truth is so immense that no words

or imagination of ours can ever embrace more than the fringe of it; always it means more than we have yet known as possible; and each advance in our knowing strips away some vain presupposition. That is the temper with which we must approach all theological study. And Mark, the gospel 'sketch,' seems providentially fitted to awake this temper as we enter upon the beginning of the history.

However, we are not left with the sketch and our imagination. The Gospels according to S. Matthew and S. Luke do partly fill up the outline. Besides additions to the narrative these Gospels contain discourses and conversations of our Lord. He teaches and his teaching reveals his mind.¹

Nor need we put the teaching on a lower level of historical value than the Marcan narrative. Read

¹ *The Gospel according to S. Mark, the Greek text with introduction, notes, and indices, by Henry Barclay Swete, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity, Cambridge* (Macmillan, 1898), is not concerned with new light from the eschatological idea, but it is a gospel commentary of unrivalled excellence. The scholarship is consummate, and the whole treatment is distinguished by an attractive simplicity. Without knowing Greek one may read a piece of Mark's narrative with Swete's terse notes and find that the course of the events moves vividly before one's eyes; the inner meaning growing proportionately in clearness. There could be no better preparation for a plain sermon.

Messrs. Macmillan published in 1915 a commentary on S. Matthew by Dr. A. H. McNeile, now Regius Professor in Trinity College, Dublin. It is planned on the same scale and form as Dr. Swete's.

The commentary on S. Luke which has helped me far more than any other is *The Gospel according to S. Luke in Greek, after the Westcott and Hort text, edited with parallel illustrations, various readings, and notes, by the Rev. Arthur Wright, M.A., Vice-President of Queens' College, Cambridge* (Macmillan, 1900). The notes are few, brief, and unlike the generality of notes. The book serves as a synopsis for the study of the Gospels as well as for S. Luke. Mr. (now Dr.) Wright had already published *A Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek* (Macmillan, 1896), which is useful to those who find Rushbrooke's *Synopticon* (Macmillan, 1880) too elaborate or too expensive. Dr. Wright's *Synopsis* is meant to illustrate the oral theory, but one need not accept the oral theory to enjoy the synopsis. For ordinary purposes, however, Tischendorf's *Synopsis Evangelica* (Leipzig, 5th ed., 1884) will satisfy the need of most students. The headings, etc., are in Latin, the gospel text in the original Greek.

Matthew and Luke and you will find that besides the Marcan narrative there is another common element in these Gospels, a cycle of teaching which includes the sermon on the mount and many parables. This is differently arranged in the two Gospels. In Matthew, for instance, the sermon is brought together and composed upon a plan. In Luke the precepts of the sermon appear in different places, with variations. Nevertheless the community in matter and in phraseology is close enough to satisfy nearly all who have examined it that a written document has been used in both Gospels for this second mass of common matter. If so, it would be likely that this primitive document was little later, indeed it might be earlier, than the other document the evangelists drew upon, *i.e.* our Mark. And this fits what tradition tells of the origin of the Gospel according to S. Matthew. Eusebius again (iii. 39) preserves the testimony of Papias that 'Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language; and each reader interpreted them as he could.' We need not linger over the precise relationship of these 'oracles' to the document from which the teaching of the Lord was drawn in our Matthew and Luke. Nor on the attempts which have been made to reconstruct the document, nor on the question whether it also contained a narrative and whether that narrative furnished details of the story, especially of the Passion, to our Matthew and Luke. We may readily admit that it is a precarious venture to materialise what the lapse of ages has dissolved, and yet decide that we have in all this a quite reasonable assurance about that part of the teaching of our Lord which is common to Matthew and Luke. And closer attention to this teaching confirms our decision. The agreement with a difference between this teaching and the story in Mark must persuade us that both are primitive.

The broad agreement is in this; that both are concerned with the kingdom. The difference is that whereas Mark depicts Jesus Christ bringing in the

kingdom, this teaching is about the moral temper which belongs to the kingdom. 'The kingdom is at hand: therefore repent' was the Lord's proclamation. In Mark we see the first clause in action; in the teaching we learn what repentance is. Hence, in the cruder sense of the word the teaching is less 'apocalyptic' than the story.¹ That is in the nature of things, and agrees with those hints of our Lord's thought upon the subject which we observed in Mark: he was assured that the kingdom which his countrymen expected was at hand, but this kingdom was far from what they crudely imagined. And if so, the manner of its coming might be very different from the popular imagination: and if that, then we have no reason to simplify the tragedy of his victory through failure into just 'a mistake.'

Before we go further it will be worth while to stay a minute or two over the word itself. Dalman shows that in Hebrew and Aramaic the kingdom of God or of heaven is an abstract rather than concrete idea. The kingdom is not the city coming down from heaven foursquare, but the 'rule' or 'sovereignty' of God. 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done' is exactly a right collocation. Such a kingdom might already be within or in the midst of men (Luke xvii. 21), and yet its king might wistfully ask, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' (Luke xviii. 8).

But, these cautions being entered, how much the teaching gains in power and true distinction when it is read as part of a bold apocalyptic gospel. We take parables of the seed growing secretly, the pearl of price and the rest as inculcating the imitation of Christ in a fresh and lovely way. But the meaning seems plain enough. We cannot but feel that Christ's disciples have progressed a good deal since the day when such parables had a hidden meaning for the

¹ For details see B. H. Streeter in *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (Oxford University Press, 1911).

multitude. But stand among that multitude, be with them disturbed by hope and doubt, be asking yourself and your neighbour what this new prophet is reported to have said about the time being fulfilled and what it may be supposed he meant, and what his authority, nay, who he himself may be. Then hear his veiled words about long secret growth suddenly bursting into full life—and such is the kingdom; or about a pearl, a treasure, found at last, but to enjoy it the finder must part with his all—and such is the kingdom. Then some months later, stand among the multitude again, and watch the prophet (whom none dare now approach unsummoned, so sublime has he grown of late), in colloquy with the Twelve. Then see him turn from them and cry aloud that all may hear: ‘If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever wills to save his own life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for the sake of me and these good tidings he shall save it. For what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and be robbed of his soul? For what should a man give in exchange for his soul? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this generation, the adulterous and sinful, even the Son of man shall be ashamed of him when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels’: and then, after a moment’s silence perhaps, ‘Verily I say unto you, there be some of those who are standing here who shall by no means taste of death until they see the kingdom of God when it has come in power.’ Would you have made up your mind at last to be among those ‘some’? At least you would have understood something you had not understood before, and why the Lord had used ambiguous parables to sift the martyr spirits from those ‘who had no depth.’

So again, we have adopted the Lord’s Prayer, and we repeat it many times for the many occasions of our ordinary day, and its daily bread means the income that we need for the complicated use and wont of

modern life, and forgiving those who trespass against us, and being kept from trial or temptation, meant something very moderate till war enlightened us. But carry back the mind and think what that prayer meant to the little flock to whom indeed it was the Father's pleasure to give the kingdom (Luke xii. 32), but who were following their Lord in amazement to Jerusalem where he had three times said he was going to die miserably, yet rise again. Then, with the fresh ideas that such recollection has formed, read again the precepts, 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal,' and 'Take no thought for the morrow,' and 'Turn the other cheek,' and 'Give to him that asketh,' and 'Enter by the narrow gate'—mark the 'enter'—all these have sharp significance and need no toning down for men who are entering the kingdom which will come so soon and end the world (if you envisage it so pictorially), or is even now changing the evil world into a life beyond all comparison in worth and blessedness (if your feeling is quicker than your imagination).

Whichever mode, imaginative, emotional or what not, is ours, we cannot conceive this kingdom as a Galilean might nineteen centuries ago. European civilisation is not the village life of Galilee; the exalted Christ interprets his Galilean simplicities according to the duties of the still growing kingdom. He himself did not turn the other cheek when they smote him in the high priest's house; his words were never dully literal. S. Paul bade men labour with their own hands to get a living: the interpretation from the exalted Christ had begun even then. But S. Paul says, like Tolstoy, we are to labour 'with our hands,' and he did so himself; and he adds that we should do it in order that we may always have to give to him that is in need. The sermon on the mount is so remarkable just because

it is capable of ever fresh interpretation, yet interpretation is a snare until we are very honest in it. And that honesty has always a touch of extravagance, of 'apocalyptic.' We are being driven (as drives the Spirit into the wilderness) to-day to consider whether a nation must not be 'as good as a good man,' and whether even a national enemy can be forgiven unto seventy times seven, and if so what forgiveness means and how its outward manifestations can be harmonised with loyalty to other requirements of our Lord himself, and how far generosity is required in disputes between capital and labour. And the church, conscious of the sermon on the mount, cannot quite acquiesce in the prudence of mere statesmanship.

On the other hand, there is a difference between the sermon on the mount and Tolstoy, of whom we naturally thought just now. The sermon is broader, more flexible, more near to life. To employ a convenient phrase of the philosophers, it is the difference between the true and an imperfect absolute. To apply (as we have to do to-day) the sermon to a vaster scale of duties, will doubtless be a long and costly enterprise. Yet it can be done. We see it being done in gradual progression as the scene extends wider and wider in the New Testament. With the close of the New Testament indeed there comes a check. Never again has there been an age of progress quite like that. Yet that stands in history and is an immortal idea, for ever effective. Again and again, as fresh needs arise, men may, if they believe in the kingdom and trust its divine extravagance, come indefinitely nearer what our Lord still aims at.

And now for the bearing of all this on our present critical study of the Gospel. Here as everywhere we see the divine ideal realised through limitations. Looking at Mark's story and the teaching in Matthew and Luke with the eye of criticism (which of course is sympathetic, not cold) we see how the simplicity of social life in Galilee, the simplicity of Jewish messianic

expectation, made just this absolute morality possible, natural, and therefore vital and fruitful for all time. A word from Schweitzer has had a vogue. He called our Lord's teaching *Interimsethik*. In Schweitzer himself there was a certain enthusiasm, and it is possible that he glanced at more in this phrase than his followers allowed. They understood it simply to mean that since the end of this world might come in a few months, our Lord could well inculcate a morality for the meanwhile which would have been reckless if he and they had contemplated a long age of human relationships and duties. Take our Lord's teaching as a whole and it will appear fair to respond: Let us believe him to have thought more of quality than of measured time—'Of that day and that hour knoweth none, not even the Son'—more of the pearl of great price than of when the mustard seed would be full-grown; and so we find him guided by a very homely faith (which he partly shared with his fellow-countrymen) to an ideal which just at that interval of time and just in those circumstances he was able to make men realise.

If we allowed ourselves at this point to appeal to the Gospel according to S. John we might go much farther in attributing interpretation of the current ideas to our Lord. But that Gospel is almost the latest book of the New Testament and we cannot understand its testimony aright till we have followed the developement which it completes. But preparation for S. John begins even in the synoptic Gospels. The Gospel according to S. Luke is one of the links between Mark and John. An example will explain what is meant by this assertion. In Luke xvii. 20 f. our Lord, being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God cometh, answered, 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, nor yet shall they say, Behold, here or there: for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.' The Greek word for 'within' should perhaps be translated 'among,' but that is little to our purpose. Take it either way and still our Lord is saying that

the coming of the kingdom is not a future event to be observed as events are observed: it is an influence even now present among men, it is to be manifested in spiritual mode rather than to come, as from a distance, at a future hour. But this is the doctrine which in John fills our Lord's discourses. It is just on this line of 'the eternal present' that in John he transforms the Jewish tradition of the advent. And in Luke we find our Lord uttering a Johannine idea in synoptic language. Does this mean that the ideas of the Johannine Christ were indeed the ideas of our Lord Jesus, that in John they are drawn out by a disciple's memory and reflection, while in Luke we have them as he actually spoke, the style still simple, the thought so unusual that most of the Galilean apostles wist not what he meant and let it pass?

Perhaps no other passage can be found in which resemblance to John is obvious, though we may note in passing the reference (iv. 44), obliterated in the later text, to our Lord's preaching in the synagogues of Judaea as throwing some faint light on the ministry in Jerusalem which is so expanded in John. But there is in Luke, and peculiar to Luke, a whole cycle of teaching which is marked by a certain subtlety as well as by other characteristics. Take the parable of the unjust steward (xvi. 1-12). The main lesson is plain. This rascally steward was so clever, bold, and painstaking in his dishonesty, that the master whom he tricked could not refrain from a sort of admiration, and our Lord says that the children of light ought then in their holier wisdom to be as bold and painstaking as the men of the wicked world are. But that being settled, our Lord adds, 'And I say to you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles. He that is faithful in the least matter is faithful also in the greater, and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in the greater. If therefore you were not faithful in the unrighteous

mammon, who will entrust the true to you? And if you were not faithful in the alien matter, who will give to you that which is our proper wealth?' The sense has been obscured by the change of 'when it fails' to 'when ye fail' in the late text; 'it' is 'the mammon of unrighteousness,' worldly wealth, which, however used, must fail at last. But the appended moral is an assurance to men of business that they may do business and follow Christ. There is indeed something in mammon or money which makes a problem—what man of business knows not that? Nevertheless, business may be a school of honour, a transforming of competition into friendship, and honour in business is a step towards, one might almost say, a sacrament of eternal faithfulness. Here is, it would seem from the Lord himself, an interpretation for practical life of the extreme apocalyptic vigour, and an interpretation which has a meditative intellectual tinge, not quite like the profound simplicity of our Lord's wisdom generally; and yet again, it is like that; it is aphoristic, veiled in ambiguous parable.

Now notice the setting of this parable. It follows the story of the prodigal son. No connexion of time or occasion is indicated. It is followed by the sneer of the Pharisees who, says S. Luke, were lovers of money, and that leads to another story about riches, the rich man and Lazarus. First, however, a few lines are interposed about the law and the prophets and John the Baptist and how every one is forcing their way into the kingdom; about the permanency of the law; about divorce. The matter of these few lines is common to Luke and Matthew, but whereas in Matthew it is distributed into orderly contexts, here it is just huddled in. We remember with surprise how Luke promised in his preface to tell everything 'in order.'

However, we get another impression when we read this Gospel through. Such disconnected scraps are few. The connexion of the three parables just noticed is quite reasonable, though it is a connexion of idea not

of time. These come too from some source which Luke alone has used. In his preface he appears to assert that he had drawn from many sources, and that is how his narrative strikes us. He had an abundance of matter which overflowed the plan laid down in Mark. Luke keeps that plan, enlarging it by an introduction, epilogue, and a long digression. After his preface, i. 1-4, he puts his 'Gospel of the Childhood,' i. 5-ii. Then he begins the Ministry in iii., carries it on to the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the Confession of S. Peter in ix., and at ix. 51 records the start upon the journey to Jerusalem. That is taken up again at xvii. 11. The ministry in Jerusalem follows. Then, xxii.-xxiv., the passion, crucifixion, and resurrection, with important enrichments from Luke's store. And the book ends with the journey to Emmaus and other appearances of the risen Lord, at the last of which he blesses all the disciples and parts from them, and (according to some texts) is carried up into heaven. Between ix. 51 and xvii. 11, the start and the resumption of the journey to Jerusalem, Luke arranges a quantity of matter, chiefly teaching, which he found no place for in the movement of his narrative. A good deal of this is common to him and Matthew, other pieces of this common matter being placed by Luke within the story proper. Matthew, who has a very masterly arrangement of his own, seems to have drawn together what he derived from this important common source so as to express his very definite idea of our Lord's law-giving for his new kingdom. Luke, with another conception of our Lord's character and purpose, and having a great variety of collected information, prefers another expedient. And it looks as though he had taken less liberty with his material than Matthew did: but that is not a point to dogmatise upon, certainly not before we have examined Matthew's Gospel also.

All this detail about order and sources may read tediously. The more serious objection is that to be

satisfactory it ought to be much more fully and precisely treated. But that has been done in many books large and small, and this book is not designed to repeat what has been so well provided elsewhere. Going back to chapter xvi., let us once more consider that context of the parable of the unjust steward. The prodigal son, the unjust steward, the rich man and Lazarus; we call these parables, but they are stories rather than similitudes or parables proper. And they have no bearing on the coming of the kingdom, they strike home far more directly upon our life to-day. And the prodigal son: what tenderness, what pathos, what theology. The rich man and Lazarus: this is often referred to as authority for the dogma of everlasting punishment, but read the story and consider its larger emphasis. The rich man and the poor: there is the main point for conscience. The better mind to which the rich man has been brought by his torment, that is at least a point of some importance in the problem of punishment. And not to pursue these characteristics further, do we not feel that we are almost in another world from Mark's? The world of the Gospel according to S. Luke: Luke's idea of the Christ, of the Gospel: can we describe or suggest this in a few lines?

Well, there is tenderness, sympathy for the poor, and a burning zeal against those who use riches ill and oppress or neglect the poor, and admiration for a Zacchaeus who dares a princely act of generous restitution. There is honour for women. There is an insistence on the possibility of forgiveness of sins, with which is associated a deep sense of the weakness and ignorance of man, of the magnanimity of God, of the joy of penitence. The bounds of the Gospel widen; to Samaritans, to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem.

This catalogue may be enlarged by any reader of the Gospel. It is evident that Luke's picture is more complex than Mark's, or than Mark's with the added teaching that is common to Luke and Matthew. Cer-

tainly Luke includes the simple primitive view of Christ and the kingdom, but his Christ has other thoughts and interests as well, the kingdom is the transformation of the present order of the world, not absolutely its supersession. And for this Luke prepares us by the opening chapters, the Gospel of the Childhood.

It has been observed by Dr. Sanday¹ and others that these chapters bear upon them the signs of good tradition. With the fall of Jerusalem the ancient worship and church life of Judaism passed away. After that it was as difficult to describe the old state of things quite naturally, as it is for a post-reformation historian to reproduce the daily life of medieval England. But these chapters tell a story of the earlier times quite naturally. To take one point which is close to our purpose, the outlook is the limited messianic outlook of Judaism before the Gospel. The *Magnificat* is very Marcan, the zealous faith of youth in the righting of wrongs and the overthrowing of oppressors. The *Benedictus* is the priest's faith in the dawn of a day when forgiveness of sins will bring light and freedom. The *Nunc Dimittis* is the aged pilgrim's vision of peace. But the 'light to lighten the Gentiles' is the only phrase that reaches beyond Israel, and that is just the old prophetic language and it is co-ordinated with 'the glory of thy people Israel.'

True; and yet the whole impression we get from these hymns is deeper than that. It is so spiritual. 'My kingdom is not of this world,' 'The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' S. Luke would have us believe that our Lord learned, what the apostles promulgated, a broad, sweet, holy doctrine of the kingdom from those 'quiet in the land' among whom he grew up and was educated.

The question therefore presents itself, whether this

¹ See *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*, pp. 165 ff., and a sermon by Professor Box on 'The Christian Messiah in the light of Judaism ancient and modern,' published in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, April 1912.

view is historical. These hymns for instance: can we suppose they were really uttered by the Blessed Virgin, Zacharias, and Simeon? Professor Box thinks they were taken by Luke from the worship of the earliest Palestinian church. If we press beyond that, what good reason can be brought against their being what they profess to be? None, except that such dramatising has always been usual in worship and in literature. The early Palestinian church may well have thrown the thought and situation into this concrete form. But on the other hand the hymns are simple and natural, almost every phrase of them drawn from the familiar language of the Old Testament. Aramaic or Hebrew would probably have been the original language whether of the three speakers or of the early worship. Luke gives them in Greek. More than that we have really no right to aver about the stages of their composition. At any rate they interpret to us almost as primitive a conception of the beginning of the Gospel as could be.

There is indeed a certain art in Luke's introduction of them, in the three ideas they stand for, just as there is art in the whole picture of the Lord's birth and childhood. Luke is a fine artist. Read his preface with the sentence rolling on and breaking like a wave on *τὴν ἀσφάλειαν*, 'the certainty.' Read his account of Zacchaeus' meeting with our Lord; of the trial before Pilate, with the gathering tumult before the judgement seat and the sudden stillness when Pilate yields and then gives sentence; these are but instances, chosen at hazard, of what may be observed throughout the Gospel and throughout Acts. We have been using the symbol 'Luke,' not the name 'S. Luke,' so as not to beg the question of who precisely this author was. It seems almost certain from the conspicuous references to the fall of Jerusalem in his prophecy of the last days in chapter xxi. that his Gospel was finished, whenever it may have been begun, later than A.D. 70. But that is merely a confirmation of what the preface had already shown. He was no eye-witness, he belonged to the

apostolic not the Galilean period. There is nothing in the Gospel to prevent his having been Luke the beloved physician of S. Paul, but we may leave our final decision on that point till we deal with S. Paul. For the present we may be content to think of him as a member of the first-century apostolic church who wrote the Gospel and at any rate the greater part of the Acts, a practised writer, consciously a historian. Does not the experience of his readers allow us also to say this? He has composed the Gospel which we western people find most in harmony with our mode of thinking; it is our favourite Gospel because it is the easiest for us to understand.

That need not mean that he has therefore so transformed the eastern original as to be untrustworthy: it rather means that his literary conscience is so like our own that we can see how carefully he seeks to get and keep the truth. Of all the evangelists he is, according to our notion, most historical. He is poetic, imaginative, skilful in making words do work; he may have his idea, his purpose, as in Acts it is commonly said he is 'apologetic' and desires to recommend Christianity to those (perhaps the Romans) who misunderstood it. But this describes history as distinguished from statistics, chronicles, legends, and ballads. Mark is something like a prose ballad, naïve and strictly faithful, as far as it goes. Luke is the work of a historian, who has perceived the richness, the many-sidedness, the future implicit in the past, the difficulty, beauty, delicacy of his subject, and has done his best to bring out all its true meaning.

As difficult a part of his task as any was offered by the reports, often perhaps oral, of simple persons who had nevertheless been eye-witnesses of the Word. When that eternal Word broke through (so to say) the use and wont of life it was impossible that such persons—perhaps that any persons—should preserve an uncoloured recollection of plain facts accurately observed, or of plain statements which they had heard and perfectly

understood. Examples are the narratives of the birth and early childhood of the Lord, and of the sequel to the resurrection, the ascension, and the first experiences of the little church at Jerusalem. These are the narratives of the beginning of the Gospel and of the Acts. The evangelist seems to have written these in a peculiarly simple direct style. We might say he wrote in biblical language, if it were not more probable that he kept as near as he could to the biblical language which his informants used. Yet it is easy to feel how he has controlled the report, not reproducing every word but selecting, equally with good sense and with reverence, and so disposing emphasis that the essential 'This indeed happened' is guarded, while mystery—the profound significance—is thrown around it. An example may be found in Acts iv. 23–31, the prayer of the company of disciples when S. Peter and S. John returned after their arrest, and the place was shaken and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. And we may, if we will observe Luke's own reverent and reticent sense of holiness and mystery, refer for another example to what this Gospel records concerning the annunciation, the salutation and the birth of the Holy Child. It would be hasty and shallow to say that Luke lifts this out of the region of the physical: thus to cut off the physical from the spiritual is just what he will not do. But the physical is dim in the distinctness of the enveloping spiritual; and painful modern controversy might perhaps be stilled, and doubts superseded, if the historical conscience of Luke were more considered.

That is almost to say that for us, just now, on this point, it might be well if Luke were taken first and Matthew interpreted by him; for in Luke mystery predominates, in Matthew there is something more like dogma. Let us dwell no longer on what is too sacred to bear discussion, and pass to the consideration of the more general character of Matthew. 'Dogma' would not be a happy word to press. But 'ecclesiastic'

is a not unsuitable epithet for this first Gospel. If Luke is the favourite Gospel of many, Matthew is the best known by all. And the reason is not merely that it stands first. It impresses by its clear arrangement, its massive dignity, its liturgical movement: no book more fit for reading in church services. When we talk of the teaching of Christ, we mean on the whole that sermon on the mount in which the Lord's teaching is gathered up into one ordered whole, and is proclaimed as the new law of the kingdom. So the parables follow, collected again and illustrating the idea. So the narrative unfolds till, as in Mark and Luke, it culminates in S. Peter's confession (xvi. 13 ff.). But now the confession is fuller and more sonorous, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And then follows the authoritative response of the royal Christ: 'And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

Is this history? Did our Lord really utter these words? The question is not like that former question about the *Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, and *Nunc Dimittis*. A little recollection showed that, though you could never prove the three persons named to have actually spoken those hymns, still you could bring no evident reason against their having done so. Here there is the silence of the other evangelists, and the strong feeling which forces itself upon the reflective reader that these are unusual words for the Lord Jesus to have spoken. But yet again reflect. Is the sense of the words so strange? We can believe from Mark at least as much as from any other document that the Lord spoke with more than man's authority. The binding and loosing

is a Jewish formula expressing a commission which Jewish churchmen believed to be entrusted to men. And when it is objected that the Gospels do not make it clear that our Lord ever intended to found a church, the obvious retort must be, What do you mean by the church? Was not the calling and training of the Twelve a founding of the church, if only the beginnings of the church be regarded with proper simplicity? Some modern writers make a good deal just now of the dominance of Rome even in the latter half of the second century,¹ and this passage has accordingly been marked as an interpolation in the interest of Roman claims, a precarious conjecture where no textual variation gives any hint of such a thing. But such suspicions are bred from reading later precision into words which still stand for ideas rather than rules. So again in xviii. 17, 'tell it unto the church': the margin of the Revised Version, 'or congregation,' restores the antique flavour of the phrase.²

Nevertheless it may be doubted whether our Lord used just these words on just this occasion. Are they not a summary of his doctrine rather than a single authoritative pronouncement? Compare the conclusion of this Gospel with its command to make disciples of all nations, 'baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' There is a certain difficulty in such a rubrical direction from the mouth of our Lord, especially of the Lord risen from the dead and holding communication, ineffably, with his apostles. But as a summary of the Gospel lived and taught by him the words are appropriate.³

¹ See for instance Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (New York, 1910).

² Cf. Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, ii. p. 275. The old Syriac was like R.V. marg. : the Peshitto corrected and defined.

³ See the Bishop of Ely in *J.T.S.*, January 1907. Mr. Conybeare had cited Eusebius' omission of part of the formula in the text, arguing therefrom against the trustworthiness of the whole tradition. Dr. Chase in answer made this suggestion of the 'summary.' In a succeeding number the Dean of Wells, Dr. J. A. Robinson, objected to Dr. Chase's explanation, and put forward a different plea for the defence.

And all this tends to bring out the character of the whole Gospel. It is, one cannot but feel, later than Luke. Its outlook is later than S. Paul's, at least in his first missionary period when he was expecting Christ to come before many of the faithful had fallen asleep. 'The kingdom is at hand.' 'Ye shall see the Son of man coming with the clouds.' Matthew indeed as well as Luke keeps these sayings and many others like them. Luke adds, enlarges, makes us understand that the Lord meant more than the obvious meaning of such sayings. Matthew carries us on to another point of view. We look back with the eyes of the settled apostolic church for whom the end is not yet. 'Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world'; with that command and promise the Lord fitly closes the Matthaean history. Jesus the Christ, as he appeared to a Galilean fisherman during the year or two he followed his Lord to the cross and the resurrection: that is the Gospel according to S. Mark. Jesus Christ the Master, revealing more and more his divine wisdom, holiness, sympathy, zeal, power, and unfathomable in his origin and purpose: that is the Gospel of S. Luke. Jesus, the anointed king under whom we now live, remembering his earthly life and fashioning our loyalty by his example, a mystic figure in the past, a very present help in every trouble now: that is the Gospel according to S. Matthew. There is the disciple's memory, the historian's insight—both of these recalling the past: and here is the worshipping church which formulates the record of the past to rule its present energy and its confidence for the future.

'Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language; and each reader interpreted them as he could,' said Papias.¹ These oracles were one of Luke's sources; they were the foundation of our completed Greek Matthew. The two metaphors are severally apt.

¹ Euseb. *H.E.* iii. 39. Cf. *supra*, p. 28.

Matthew is built up, and as in an ancient church the work has been done anonymously. S. Matthew wrote his Gospel in Judaea 'while Peter and Paul were founding the church at Rome,' says Irenaeus, and it was 'for the use of Jewish converts and in their national language.'¹ Irenaeus is not a first-hand authority like Papias, and his account may be interpreted somewhat largely. It is but an hypothesis, we cannot be certain about these far off things; but it seems to explain both the external evidence and the character and content of the Gospel itself if we imagine some such process as this. The primitive church at Jerusalem for a while continued its ancestral Jewish practices of worship. The coming of the Lord was looked for daily. His prayer was repeated, his sacrament of hope was celebrated, showing forth his death 'till he should come,' but little more was needed for the institution of religion during the brief interval that remained. Then, as is sketched at the beginning of Acts, delay led on to settled faith and work. Institutions were adopted, elders, charities, deacons, ordered worship. Interest of memory was roused, and the Hebrew oracles of S. Matthew were read in the church services. S. Paul and persecution forced the church to become missionary. New communities were founded. In their worship too the oracles were read, translated now as each best could; translated and combined with the narrative of the Saviour's deeds and death and resurrection. Translation brought adaptation with it. The glad and solemn service was an example of faith expressing an idea in orderly sequence, and the Gospel that grew out of the lections, as they had fallen into form and order since they were first selected from the collection of S. Matthew, was moulded into harmony with the rest of the liturgy. The faith and hope and penitence, all the needs and conscience of the divine family were reflected in its Gospel, and its testimony and their spirit

¹ Irenaeus *c. Haer.* iii. 1. 1 (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* v. 8); Westcott, *Introd.*, iv. 2. i.

had reciprocal influence, regulating and stimulating development. The development would take time. No reference to the Gospel in Christian literature would prove it to have been finally settled in shape and content before the beginning of the second century, which is just the date of the church's emerging from its apostolic inspiration into its period of consolidation.

Of course this is but an hypothesis,¹ a guess about long past facts in order to account for facts that may still be observed. Nor is it an hypothesis which would be accepted by all the observers, that is, by all readers of this Gospel. And this admission is important. It means that, spite of all we have been noticing, the impression generally left by the whole is so strongly primitive. It certainly is, and the hypothesis was meant to include this impression. Whatever variations were made in arrangement, whatever adaptations were made in the tradition of the Lord's words, whatever additions were drawn from records and memories to fill up the story, all this was done with scrupulous honesty and reverence. Acts and S. Paul's epistles and the Gospel and epistles of S. John all shew how the apostles kept the enthusiasm of the Christian people in check. What the apostles guarded was also guarded by their successors. Private gospels, extravagant and credulous, were multiplied in the second century. In the solemn ordered worship of the church the ancient Gospel remained the norm of Christian life and Christian thought.

And it was amply sufficient to satisfy the heart. 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and

¹ Partly suggested by some sentences in Dr. Burkitt's *Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus*, p. 118: 'Some of the freshness of Mark is gone, and the style has a certain hieratic and set character, which seems like a premonition of future ecclesiastical use. No one can doubt that the Gospel of Matthew is better suited than the Gospel of Mark for reading aloud in church. But both tell the same story; the outlines of the picture remain the same.'

ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light' (xi. 28 ff.). This is one of the 'additions' in the completed Matthew. It has something of the ring of the Matthaean summaries. We may or may not be inclined to imagine that the saying achieved its perfect liturgical form gradually, by repeated devotional use, as did our *Gloria in excelsis*. But we may also feel assured that it crystallises what the Lord himself did say, and that it was not added to the 'All things have been delivered unto me of the Father' until the church had been thoroughly satisfied of its being a genuine fragment of Galilean recollection. There we see Matthew sympathetic to the heart of all the worshipping disciples, rescuing from oblivion an echo of the gentleness of Christ. In xix. 28 the converse of this is to be found. 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' That promise would have sounded natural enough from the Galilean Christ to Jewish disciples; it was part of their traditional hope. But how strange, how all but incomprehensible, it seems to us. And strange too it must have seemed to many as Aramaic gave place to Greek, and Gentile hearers took the place of Jewish. But it was in the primitive record: Luke has it as well as Matthew: therefore it was preserved: the antique Gospel was not to be toned down to suit new taste. In Luke it is toned down a little. The context suggests a mystical interpretation (Luke xxii. 24-30), and the old apocalyptic phrase is kept by Matthew more wholly than by Luke (cf. Acts iii. 21, i. 6). And that indeed is characteristic of Matthew. The Jewish Gospel it used to be called. Its Jewish colour is obvious, the liturgical form is less immediately observed. And the outcome of the whole examination is that Matthew as well as Luke concur with Mark in faithfulness to the original tradition of the good tidings, to

the original impression made by the Lord Jesus Christ on those who heard and saw him.

Faithfulness; yet not without interpretation and reflection. But that must be admitted even in Mark. Our Lord spoke Aramaic; the earliest written Gospel is in Greek, a translation from the primitive event, and translation implies new men and minds to read it. As soon as translation appears a different set of traditions has flowed into the main stream: the absolute pristine simplicity is passed. And the very distinctness of the apocalyptic idea in Mark betrays reflection, however unconscious: the story comes reflected from a mind which puts things clearly because it does not see all things. Matthew and Luke see more, but they see their more with less clearness.

So, when we look back and consider what we have gained by our examination of these three presentations of the first tradition, we must acknowledge this to begin with. We cannot quite recover what the Galilean disciples felt, still less dare we define precisely what their Master thought of himself and of his work. We know all we need to know in order to go on learning about him from the rest of the New Testament, from the growing experience of the church through succeeding centuries, and from our own experience. 'I do not think we have material for constructing a consecutive life of Christ: we can know all that we need about him,' Dr. Headlam somewhere says.

Secondly, we perceive that these Gospels start from the visible, the earthly, the human. When 'Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptised of John in the Jordan' (Mark i. 9) he came as a man among men. It may be necessary, if we 'would rightly think of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ,' that we should think of the person, in whom the two natures are held together, as divine, and keep that steadfastly before us as the regulative principle for doctrine. But historically, to the reader of the Gospels, that principle

is discovered in due course: the story does not start with it. And indeed when the light of external history is brought to bear on the composition of the Gospels, it would appear more than probable that one main object of the evangelists was to freshen and restore and guard the doctrine of the real manhood of Christ.

Thirdly however we notice that the apprehension of the Christhood, and therefore of the more than manhood of the Lord, begins at once, at the very moment of the baptism. And that is conspicuously so in Mark, and it is connected with an apocalyptic view of the whole Gospel which is intense and penetrating, but strange to modern western minds, and set about with difficulties and limitations.

Fourthly, these limitations promise on closer attention to prove opportunities and faculties: the glory shines through the humiliation. No other way could victory have come, redemption have been wrought, through the cross. Christianity in fact must necessarily be apocalyptic. Apocalypse appears at the beginning in a fleeting form which gradually wears away as the faith of the New Testament matures. But it comes also with a moral essence; and that can never be disregarded. All worldliness of course is clean contrary to this. But other and better tempers are also contrary. Rationalism, the temper which reasons before it believes,¹ may be very moral, the scrupulousness of a noble conscience, and being so it cannot be 'far from the kingdom of God.' But it is contrary to this essential gospel temper: and so we see how again and again rationalism comes in to refresh, like salt, conventional faith, yet abides not, and having done its work is absorbed by the recovered heroic spirit of the ancient Gospel.

And yet again, fifthly and lastly, an exaggerated estimate of the apocalyptic element in this primitive Gospel is false. We do not know all curiosity might wish to know about Jesus Christ 'in the days of his

¹ See Newman's Oxford Sermons, *passim*.

flesh,' but we may be sure we gain no accuracy by making the problem simpler than it is. Mark was too long neglected. There is no good reason for accepting the rediscovered Mark as the only witness that stands the test of historical science. Matthew and Luke are to be read with proper caution, but there is no need to check the profound emotions which they rouse. It is one of the critic's duties to purge himself of sophistication, and when his critical faculties are wide awake, then to read naturally again. Apply, not some, but all the critical tests to Matthew and Luke, and their more complex insight wins credence, and enlarges the intellect as well as the heart. It is true that Matthew and Luke carry the reader over that imperceptible line which distinguishes the ministering from the exalted Christ. But so in large degree does Mark. There is no other way of studying the New Testament.

II

THE GALILEAN GOSPEL INTERPRETED BY S. PAUL THE AMBASSADOR OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED, RISEN AND TO COME.

MUCH of S. Paul's life may be gathered from his epistles. He was one of those who can talk about themselves and give pleasure thereby. Here are a few passages out of many, for a whole chapter might be made by collecting all he tells about himself in his letters :

‘If any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless. Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him’ (Phil. iii. 4 ff.).

‘For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havock of it: and I advanced in the Jews’ religion beyond many of mine own age among my

countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.

'Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now touching the things which I write unto you, before God, I lie not. Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: but they only heard say, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havock; and they glorified God in me' (Gal. i. 11 ff.).

He goes on to tell at length of another visit to Jerusalem fourteen years later. He went up, he says, 'by revelation,' and he insists on his apostleship being still committed to him by the Lord and not by the church at Jerusalem and how he and Barnabas were recognised by James and Cephas and John 'who were reputed to be pillars' as divinely sent to the Gentiles; and how some time afterwards he stood against Cephas at Antioch for the freedom of the Gentiles from the law. Compare 1 Cor. ix. 1, 'Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord?' And again speaking of the risen Lord, after enumerating those by whom he was 'seen,' he writes (1 Cor. xv. 8 ff.):

'And last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the

grace of God I am what I am : and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain ; but I laboured more abundantly than they all : yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.'

And here, in 2 Cor. xi. 21 ff., is his picture of the laborious apostolic life :

' Yet whereinsoever any is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am bold also. Are they Hebrews ? so am I. Are they Israelites ? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham ? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ ? (I speak as one beside himself) I am more ; in labours more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep ; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak ? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not ? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my weakness.'

And he goes on to show the inward glory and power of the same apostolic life : ' And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee : for power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake : for when I am weak, then am I strong ' (2 Cor. xii. 9 ff.).

‘Power is made perfect in weakness.’ So the true text, not ‘my power.’ All these passages reveal S. Paul’s character and mind, while he tells facts. And this is one of his mental habits, to get as soon as may be to a principle which co-ordinates the facts, and supplies confidence to face whatever shall still come. The whole of this epistle is intensely personal, concrete and historical, and therefore it is almost more creative in theology than any.

The epistle to the Philippians was written from Rome: ‘Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ in the whole Praetorium,’ which seems to mean as the Revised Version explains, ‘throughout the whole praetorian guard.’ He is in danger of his life, yet confidently expects release. ‘For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if to live in the flesh,—if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wot not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith; that your glorying may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again’ (Phil. i. 12 ff.).

The short letter to Philemon at Colossae comes from the same captivity. ‘Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, yet for love’s sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus.’ The epistle to this Colossian Philemon goes with the epistle to the Colossians as a church, and that is closely connected with the epistle to the Ephesians. All four come from a captivity at Rome, from which S. Paul hopes to be released. In 2 Tim. iv. 6 ff. we find him in captivity, it seems a second time, for here

he does not expect release but death. 'For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.'

We can make out a good deal of S. Paul's travels from these letters;¹ visits to Jerusalem, a stay at Antioch, journeyings in Galatia and Asia Minor, in Greece both Macedonia (the northern part) and Achaia (the southern); churches established in Galatia, and at Thessalonica, Philippi and Corinth; at Ephesus, Colossae and Laodicea; then captivity at Rome where there had been brethren in the faith (S. Paul does not address them as a 'church') to whom he had written an epistle, some time before he came there. Then there is the second captivity from which the epistle to Timothy was written: it looks as though this would end with his death, and according to ancient and unvarying tradition he was martyred at Rome in the reign of Nero.

A long list, too, of his friends and companions may be drawn up from the epistles. Silvanus, Timothy, Titus, Sosthenes, Tertius who 'wrote' the epistle to the Romans, Onesimus the runaway slave of Philemon, whom Paul sent back to his master 'that thou shouldest have him for ever; no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord'; Epaphroditus, Tychicus, Mark the cousin of Barnabas, and Barnabas himself though only in the

¹ The best account I know of S. Paul's life and work is *S. Paul and Christianity*, by A. C. Headlam, D.D., now Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford (Murray, 1913). Dr. Inge, the Dean of S. Paul's, has lately published his incisive study of S. Paul in *Outspoken Essays*, (Longmans, 1919). Dr. A. H. McNeile, Regius Professor, T.C.D., has gathered the latest scholarship, adding valuable matter of his own, in *St. Paul, his life, letters, and Christian doctrine* (Camb. Univ. Press, 1920).

early Galatian period. We need not complete the list, but one other name must have special mention. 'Only Luke is with me,' he writes to Timothy at the end of his course (2 Tim. iv. 11); 'Luke the beloved physician' of Col. iv. 14, 'perhaps the brother whose praise in the Gospel is spread through the churches' of 2 Cor. viii. 18. That last reference may however have been but an early fancy—it is as early as Origen¹—playing on the still earlier tradition of the church that Luke was the author of Acts and of that 'former treatise' or Gospel which the author of Acts also dedicated to Theophilus (Luke i. 3, Acts i. 1).

It is from the Acts that we fill up the outline of events for S. Paul's life. We have in Acts speeches of S. Paul, and especially three in which he describes his conversion, that conversion to which he refers in Galatians. And we have a history of his movements from the martyrdom of S. Stephen, in which he took part, to his captivity in Rome. We read of his conversion on the road to Damascus; of his baptism at Damascus; of his being brought to Antioch by Barnabas; of his missionary journey with Barnabas in Asia Minor; of the council at Jerusalem to consider the position of the Gentile converts he and Barnabas had made; of his journey to Greece; his stay at Ephesus; the second journey to Greece, from which he returned at last to Jerusalem; of his arrest in Jerusalem, trial and imprisonment at Caesarea, appeal to Caesar, and journey to Rome. And the book ends: 'And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him,' a state of things which corresponds with the happy impression left by the epistle to the Philippians.

Such correspondence between the epistles and the Acts is, on the surface and on the whole, the rule; nor

¹ Origen *ap.* Euseb, *H.E.* vi. 25; Westcott, *Introd.*, c. iii.

are the 'undesigned coincidences' rare. Yet there are differences, and Acts has nothing to say about a release, further activity, and a second captivity; that is, Acts throws no light on the three Pastoral epistles. And in any case it is necessary to know something more about all these documents before we take their authority for granted.

First then the epistles. The earliest canon or list is Marcion's, the founder of a famous heresy, who flourished A.D. 150. He received as Paul's ten epistles and placed them in this order: Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Romans, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians (Ephesians), Colossians, Philemon, Philip-pians. He spoke indeed of an epistle to the Laodiceans, but it is all but certain that he meant by this the same epistle as our Ephesians. If any one will look at Ephesians i. 1 and Colossians iv. 16 in the Revised Version he will understand why. The words 'at Ephesus' are omitted in 'some very ancient authorities' (R.V. margin), and this means that Ephesus was only one of the addresses of this circular letter, Laodicea being another. Marcion omits Hebrews and the three Pastorals. Hebrews does not bear the name of Paul, and nowhere claims to be his. The Alexandrine church in the latter half of the second century counted it among the Pauline letters, but as far as we know no other church did then, and we only know of the custom of the Alexandrine church from its scholars Clement and Origen who criticise it, Origen declaring roundly that S. Paul could not have composed this epistle himself, whatever its indirect connexion with him may be: 'Who wrote the letter,' he says, 'God knows.' However, the easy Alexandrine habit of reckoning it somehow Pauline spread, and from the fourth century it was counted as Paul's in the east generally, and by many when they mentioned it casually in the west. Yet Rome and the west continued for many centuries to protest that this was contrary to ancient tradition, and we may be satisfied that from the first

Hebrews was not accepted by the church at large as a letter composed by S. Paul. It certainly does owe much to S. Paul in its theology, but what is original and different from his mode of teaching is far more conspicuous in it, and we should only confuse our examination of the faith according to Paul, if we took it into consideration in this chapter.

But there is no such early corroboration of Marcion in his omission of the Pastorals. Besides the Pauline epistles enumerated, Marcion admitted only one other book into his New Testament, the Gospel according to S. Luke, and not the whole of that. His selection was evidently arbitrary and private. He seems to have chosen what he wanted to suit his doctrine without much respect for the tradition of the church. Nevertheless it has for some time begun to appear that in textual matters much of what his orthodox opponents condemned as wilful alterations were really varieties of reading for which he had authority in ancient or contemporary manuscripts, and it may be that he remains the sole witness to early doubts about these Pastoral epistles. Doubts were felt about them as soon as modern criticism arose, and it cannot be said that these doubts have been annulled. There is little in the lack of evidence for S. Paul's release and labours after the imprisonment recorded in Acts. So far as Acts goes it would rather lead us to suppose that the two years were not his last two years of life; else why is nothing said about his death? The conjecture that the author intended to write a third treatise dealing with the later years is a more probable one. Still it is only a conjecture, and the Pastorals are left to tell their own story unsupported. The main objection to that story is that the three epistles do not tell much, and have somewhat the air of making what story they do tell out of the hints from the earlier epistles. And yet again this is not so very obvious when they are broadly read, and if it were so, why did not the composer do his work more boldly and tell more to satisfy curiosity?

The answer could only be that he was a truthful person and unwilling to invent. But then he has invented the great invention, S. Paul's name and greeting : if so, this is a contradiction which claims more subtle handling. Then there is the rather highly developed mechanism of church order. But we are rather rapidly discovering to-day that church order did develop sooner than used to be supposed ;¹ and after all, the developement in the Pastorals has not gone so very far. Contrast the office of Timothy and Titus with the idea of a bishop in the epistles of Ignatius, and go back from the tabulated arguments of a critical introduction to the Pastorals themselves and see how simple and primitive the ministry in general, the directions about widows, and so on, are. The language, the words and phrases, are not quite the same as in Romans, Corinthians, Galatians. Nor is the language of Ephesians and Colossians. That has roused suspicion about Ephesians and Colossians, but Colossians at any rate tends more and more to vindicate itself, and when we compare the whole Pauline collection with a certainly unpauline book like Hebrews, we feel the general contrast so strong that a cautious Grecian will hesitate to make up his mind about the particular contrast within the group.

There is, however, one true difficulty which does still daunt the student, and the more he is an enthusiastic and reverent admirer of S. Paul the more it daunts him. It is that in the Pastorals the essential mind of S. Paul is generally absent. We shall see more distinctly as we go on what that mind is. For the present let us merely quote Gal. ii. 20, 'I have been crucified with Christ ; yet I live ; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me ; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.' This deep, personal, intellectual, and moral passion

¹ See *Essays on the Early History of the Church and Ministry*, edited by H. B. Swete, D.D. (Macmillan, 1918),

informs all the other epistles. There is hardly a trace of it in the regulations, advice, and warning which fill the pages of the Pastorals. And this cannot be accounted for by their 'pastoral' character. There are plenty of directions, rules, and admonitions in the other epistles. But there all starts from and runs out into this very marked theology; all is (to repeat the word) 'informed' by it. In the Pastorals it is not so. Those who have learned the terms from Dr. Bigg¹ would say that the 'mystic' has turned 'disciplinarian.' That would, of course, be no disparagement of the Pastorals: Dr. Bigg took the noble first epistle of S. Peter as the type of disciplinarian theology. But it is a question whether such a change would befall so uncommon, so complete, and so deeply moulded a character as S. Paul's. And there is a further embarrassment. This Pauline mind does not run through the Pastorals with lessened or diverted intensity. For whole paragraphs it is not there at all. But now and again it appears, contrasting with the context. The passage in 2 Timothy (iv. 6 ff.) already quoted is an instance;² and again and again in this epistle especially we seem to catch and lose again the well-known accent.

Is it not possible that the explanation may be somewhat as follows? These Pastorals are much edited communications of S. Paul's. He really did write three, or perhaps more, letters to Timothy and Titus about their episcopal or presbyteral charge. But these letters were worn and torn before the time came for making the collection, the Corpus Paulinum. Filling up, piecing together, was necessary. Our three Pastoral epistles are the result. There has been no forgery; that odious word is out of the question in any part of

¹ *Commentary on the epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* in Clark's International Critical Commentaries, Introduction, pp. 37 ff.

² Of course it is obvious to compare Phil. ii. 17, and the perfect words in Timothy might be a retouching of the old phrase by another than Paul: short things of wondrous beauty have been struck out by imitation or critical conjecture—'And a' babbled of green fields' may be an instance. But is there solid ground for such suspicious caution here?

New Testament criticism. It is not even the possibility of innocent imitation that need be considered, *i.e.* of directions written in the name of S. Paul because they were known to be his mind and will, and that was a recognised mode of continuing the master's authority; indeed the conclusion of 2 Timothy would hardly fit into that hypothesis. It was just the best expedient that could be devised for preserving what remained of S. Paul's own words.

Some such explanation seems to cover all the puzzling peculiarities of 2 Timothy. But it may be combined with the recollection that in many of his generally acknowledged epistles S. Paul lets us know that he has employed a secretary. Sometimes he would dictate, we may suppose; and for the most part we do seem to hear the very words coming fast and earnest from his lips, as in Romans which Tertius wrote. Sometimes he may have given the plan and more or less of the detail and left the secretary to copy all out fair.¹ And this may account for the difficulties which have been felt about allowing Ephesians as well as Colossians to be really Paul's. As for Colossians and 2 Thessalonians (the only other epistles of the collection which are seriously questioned to-day) it seems hardly necessary for our purposes to discuss the difficulties which have been felt about them. To minute observation some things do appear which are not quite easy to explain.

¹ Compare this introductory note to Lightfoot's *Biblical Essays*: 'Possessed of a remarkably retentive memory, he preferred to trust to outlines, rather than write out in full what he intended to deliver in the lecture-room. Accordingly, in those essays which are described as printed from lecture notes, it has been found necessary to frame into sentences page after page which in the original notes exists only in the briefest summary. It is inevitable therefore that in places the Bishop's meaning will have been obscurely expressed, if not entirely missed.'

The difficulty in editing worn-out documents is illustrated in the *Life of F. D. Maurice*, i. pp. 377 ff. A letter from Maurice to A. J. Scott is printed with five gaps where 'the manuscript is torn off. Mr. A. J. Scott was so fond of reading the letter that he carried it about in his waistcoat pocket till it had been worn to pieces.'

A quarter of a century ago criticism was minute and fastidious, and almost expected to discover that traditions of authorship were insupportable. The strictness of that critical inquiry has been a salutary discipline not without solid results. To-day we recognise that the prejudice is not worth more than prejudice generally, and that of the two risks the lesser is to start from assuming the probable truth of sober claims, plainly set forth and long admitted, especially as we know how far from easy-going about 'disputed' books the church of the first three centuries was. And if we hold to the principle, whatever the problem forgery is not the solution; and to the evident fact, that whether entirely from S. Paul or no, the manner and mind is exceedingly Pauline, our disinclination to retrace the trite lines of controversy will not seem unreasonable.

To sum up. The letters to Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, the first to Thessalonians, and with slight reservation the second, are admittedly Paul's. The four epistles of the captivity, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and with slight reservation Ephesians, are also his. Hebrews does not properly belong to the Pauline collection at all.

We turn to Acts, that delightful story which might well be styled the best of church histories, if 'history' did not imply a reconstruction of the past, whereas the charm of Acts is that it breathes the freshness of its own period. Few read it as a story (forgetting as they read its documentary value) without enjoying just that fresh air; and this natural enjoyment is quite as fair a prejudice to start criticism with as any other. It is the spontaneous first thought, so weighty if third thoughts effect a return to it.¹

¹ See for Acts in general, and for justification of conservative second thoughts after the criticism of twenty or thirty years ago, Dr. Headlam's article in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, and Harnack's *Luke the Physician* and *The Acts of the Apostles* (English translations in Williams and Norgate's Crown Theological Library).

The opening verses plainly show that the author of Acts is the author also of the third Gospel. He seems to speak of himself (using 'we') as the companion of S. Paul from Troas to Philippi (xvi. 11 ff.), and again from Philippi to Rome (xx. 6 ff.). Tradition, which goes back to Marcion and is not contradicted by any earlier statement, says this author is the Luke named in Col. iv. 14 as the beloved physician and in 2 Tim. iv. 10 as the last of S. Paul's friends left with him in his last imprisonment. The phrase in 2 Cor. viii. 18, 'the brother whose praise is in the gospel,' had been referred to him as early as Origen, but that was perhaps only an inference from the already accepted 'Gospel according to S. Luke.' There is no real difference in style between the 'we' passages and the rest of the story of S. Paul. Such difference as may fairly be noticed is between the whole of the latter chapters and the story of the young church in Jerusalem in the first eleven chapters; and this is analogous to the style of the opening chapters of the Gospel in which Luke reports with a peculiar simplicity what he has learned from ingenuous witnesses but such as were untrained in literary evidence. And—the coincidence may be taken for what it may be worth—the entrance of the 'we' narrative fits with what we read of S. Paul's illness in Gal. iv. 13; the physician joined him first as a physician whose services were required in Galatia, whether south or north. As for discrepancies between Acts xv. (Paul in Jerusalem for the 'council') and Gal. i. and ii., obscurities would be a more accurate term than discrepancies. Such obscurities still and almost invariably puzzle us when an event is illustrated by the letters and narratives of different persons, and much tedious comparison may be superseded by the consideration that there is no requirement in friendship for the friends to study one another's books. Moreover there are differences between Paul's epistles and the Acts which have parallels within Acts itself, as for instance the ideas of

Paul and of Luke respectively concerning the Holy Spirit in connexion with the baptism of John (cf. xviii. 25 with xix. 4). These differences are natural between the layman and the ecclesiastic, and no small measure of the interest roused by Acts comes from the author's personal character. He is neither the mystic nor the disciplinarian of Dr. Bigg. He follows no party in the church but is intent upon all as historian and scholar; aware too of the varying approximation to truth of fact which variety in evidence obliges him to aim at.

This variety we have already noticed with regard to the opening record of the beginning of the church in Jerusalem. It is worth while noting that the suspected error about Theudas and Judas the Galilean (v. 36 f.) occurs in these chapters. It is quite unnecessary to force this into evidence of the (later) author's dependence on Josephus. It may be compared with the reference in the Gospel (ii. 2) to the governorship of Cyrenius, which may also (though it by no means certainly does) betray a slight error or carelessness.¹ At any rate neither of these possible errors belongs to the more strictly historical parts of the books, and even in the parts where they do come—sketched

¹ Cyrenius was governor (*legatus pro praetore*) in A.D. 6-7 and he held a census then. That census was well remembered for the riots it caused. S. Luke makes it clear that the census when our Lord was born was not the well-known one but earlier. That is the important point and S. Luke allows no doubt about it. Sir William Ramsay brings evidence for an earlier governorship of Cyrenius. His evidence is not conclusive. Cyrenius very likely did hold a temporary appointment as military *legatus pro praetore* for a while before he held the administrative appointment. But it is not clear, and perhaps hardly likely, that he held the administrative appointment twice. Professor Forbes Duckworth would translate *πρώτη ἐγένετο ἡγεμονεύοντος, κ.τ.λ.*, 'before Cyrenius was governor of Syria.' But though S. John can write *πρώτος μου* I doubt whether Luke would have been content with such colloquialism. The sentence is somewhat loosely written however, and it looks more as though Luke had corrected a first statement that the census was Cyrenius's well-known one, and had made his correction rather roughly. Anyhow he has put the date right—not Cyrenius's well-known census but the earlier one: and that is enough to indicate his trustworthiness.

largely with few lines, but those few most true and telling—they do not greatly affect the clearness of the narrative.

It is impossible to decide with certainty when Acts was composed. As it tells nothing of S. Paul's fortunes after the two years in Rome, not even saying whether he was tried and released or not, the natural supposition would be that it was written just at the end of the two years (A.D. 61 or 62) while he still awaited trial. But the Gospel is referred to in the opening verses as 'the first' or 'former' treatise. It is almost impossible to think that the prediction of the siege of Jerusalem (Luke xxi.), with the distinct allusions as to a recollected event which colour it in this Gospel, was written before A.D. 70, and if this impression were mistaken, the whole Gospel would still imply some considerable interval after the appearance of the Gospel according to S. Mark. No conjecture of two editions or later retouchings would easily bring this 'former treatise' within the first sixty decades. And yet even severe critics tend more and more to allow Acts to the two years' period. All would become intelligible if we suppose Acts to have been written first, and then the Gospel. The two (perhaps in the second edition¹) were published together, 'the former treatise' indicating historical sequence and place in the two-volumed work, not the order of composition. This supposition would remove a good deal of the difficulty about the Pastoral epistles. But it is merely a supposition. It cannot be proved, and as soon as taste, prejudice, and guessing are allowed we are bound to remember that some readers feel the close of Acts to be quiet not abrupt, and just what ought to have been the close had the first (and only) imprisonment ended by condemnation.

¹ For the hypothesis of two editions see Blass, *Philology of the Gospels* (Macmillan, 1898), and his editions of Acts (Teubner, 1895, 1896), who thus accounts for the large variation of text in Codex Bezae. An account of his theory is given by Kenyon in his *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, pp. 341 ff.

Dr. Moffatt writes in *The Historical New Testament* (p. 415):

‘From the standpoint of modern realism it would no doubt be more satisfactory to have had Acts rounded off with an account of Paul’s martyr death. But to expect such a finalé is to mistake the whole current of the book. The author’s silence upon Paul’s death almost certainly means that the apostle was condemned by the Roman authorities, or that the Christian church had—by the end of the first century—lost all definite knowledge of how and when he died; a conclusion which is corroborated by the vague allusions in Clement of Rome. Yet even had he known the details of the apostle’s death, there is no reason why this writer should have added them. The taste for details of Christian martyrdom was a later growth. Besides, Acts is not a biography of Paul, but a sketch of the early church in its development through the jars and problems and energies of the early apostles to its culminating hold upon Rome. And as the author does not give even a full sketch of Paul’s previous career, it is not uncharacteristic of him to stop short of that tragic event which followed the two years’ residence at Rome. As writer and readers probably were aware of the general fact of Paul’s death, the former had as little interest in telling it as in suppressing it, particularly as it contradicted the general purport of his volume. Possibly, too, Nero’s treatment of Paul was silently omitted as a deplorable exception to the normal policy of the State. . . . Acts xx. 25 is more than a presentiment of the speaker. It is obviously a tragic fact, solemnly ratified by the historian (xx. 38).’

Some of these observations are more acute than others. The argument gains apparent force when illustrated by Dr. Moffatt’s view of the New Testament as a whole, and it is conceivable that some authors at about A.D. 100 might pass over the death of S. Paul as well known. But that is hard to imagine of Luke the beloved

physician; and if there is no cogent reason to separate the 'we' passages, the 'travel document,' from the rest, we may with some confidence accept Luke as the author of Acts. The objection to the trustworthiness of his narrative might still be raised that it is an 'apology,' constructed to recommend the Christian church to the Roman empire, or (which seems more descriptive of the book) the Roman empire to the church. But the empire with its strong and orderly justice really was a help to the missionary church during the period of the Acts. The idea does enter into the plan of Acts, and if there were no ideas governing the writer's selection and arrangement his book would not be the great book it is; if this were not one of these ideas he would show that he had not realised the historical situation in its proper proportions, for the change from Rome the unconscious protector to Rome the persecutor is a marked feature in the developement of the faith of the New Testament, Paul's letters witnessing to the one stage, Hebrews, Peter, and the Johannine books to the other.

On the whole then we take Acts as trustworthy material for filling up the glimpses S. Paul's letters afford of his life and work. Checked by his letters, Acts also gives a broad view of the faith and life of the church in general at this period. It was not exclusively Pauline. It included considerable variety in faith and discipline, but it was one and it was apostolic.

Saul of Tarsus was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, a good Pharisaic education which he zealously improved. He may have added a veneer of Greek letters at Tarsus, but nothing is told of this, nor do we know how much of his early life was spent at Tarsus. He seems to have been a well-to-do gentleman, he commanded a troop under the high priest, he addressed Felix and Agrippa as no inferior, he was a Roman citizen, and his trade of tent-making is not against this; whether according to ordinary Jewish custom of the

time or not, he was *grand seigneur* enough to work for a living when he changed his way of life and found it sometimes necessary to do so.

He enters Luke's history of the church at the martyrdom of S. Stephen. 'The witnesses,' *i.e.* the appointed executioners who after the first rush of the mob carried out the sentence deliberately, 'laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.' In this abrupt note the figure stands out which is to fill so many chapters. And the note is precisely calculated as to its position. Here in Jerusalem, the holy city of bigoted Judaism, a contest has arisen within the Christian church which springs out of an old opposition in the Jewish church. It was the opposition of orthodox to liberal Judaism, of the Hebrews to the Hellenists. The Hebrews were the old-fashioned Jews who held strictly to the letter of the law. A century later these were represented by the descendants of the Pharisees. At present the Pharisees were with the Hebrew party indeed, yet entertained a progressive element in their doctrine; at least they were on the side of developement in faith. Still they were strict, and when things had come to such a pass as Stephen's audacity, Saul the zealous pupil of the Pharisees would sternly decide against such soul-destroying Hellenism. The Hellenists were the Greek-speaking Jews, imbued with more cosmopolitan ideas in religion, already looking for some readjustment of the Jewish law to suit modern needs. The first theological question which was to trouble and so to broaden and deepen the Christian faith was whether orthodox or Hellenistic Judaism should be the matrix of the new faith. This question the young Pharisee Saul was destined to grapple with, then to solve by enlarging the scope of it. He stands here just where historical art requires that he should stand in the picture, just as later he appears again where and when he is needed, to deal with the Hellenistic difficulty in the Christian church at Antioch, and from thence to be led on by

the Spirit to bring not only Hellenists but Greeks or mere pagans from Pisidia and afterwards from Corinth to the Gospel.

And again the note comes just where it should in preparation for the conversion on the road to Damascus. Whatever the imperfections of Saul's early life and faith, no one can read Romans without perceiving that righteousness had always been his passion.¹ In Stephen he saw righteousness: deplorably misled perhaps but righteousness at least, and death braved for the sake of it. But was that all? It needs no quick imagination to suppose that Saul often asked himself, Did Stephen really see his Lord? Then outside Damascus, he himself saw the same Jesus, and was mastered by his love, his majesty, his deity. He broke his loyalty to the high priest and was led blind and dishonoured into Damascus. Except for one mention of a nephew in Acts xxiii. we hear no more of his family. Except affection and obstinate hope for his Jewish brethren as a whole—he would fain be himself anathema from Christ for them, and the final issue of the incoming of the Gentiles shall be that all Israel shall be saved (Rom. ix. 1 ff., xi. 25)—all the relationships of the past were cut off. Romans vi. should be read in connexion with Acts ix. Such a dead Saul waking to a real newness of life when Ananias baptised him, was the Paul who wrote to the Romans that 'we were buried with him through baptism and death, that as Christ rose from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we may walk in newness of life.'

Then came a period of retirement and meditation, or what S. Paul, with an accuracy we must try to understand if we would understand his faith, calls revelation. Things are never quite so absolute as we would have them and he was not altogether silent at Damascus (Acts ix. 20, Gal. i. 17), nor perhaps did he leave his home without farewell (Acts ix. 30, xi. 25). But his work began in earnest when some had spoken

¹ Cf. Matthew Arnold's *St. Paul and Protestantism*.

the good tidings at Antioch to Hellenistic Jews¹ and disputes arose thereby and Barnabas brought him thither. Thence the two friends went with alms to the brethren in Judaea, and on their return to Antioch the command of the Holy Spirit completed the impulse which circumstances had begun, and Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark started on the first missionary journey.

As in Antioch the Galilean title of 'disciple' was first changed to 'Christian,' so on this journey Saul became Paul. 'Christian' was perhaps a nickname which the New Testament church never cared to adopt (cf. 1 Peter iv. 16), and indeed Paul himself with his 'saints,' 'brothers,' and his profound 'in Christ,' must have made it sound thin; the name 'Paul' was chosen in triumph and affection from his first notable, perhaps Gentile, convert in Cyprus. The journey was a modest round of the southern parts of what we call Asia Minor. The Romans included a good part of this country in their province of Galatia, and it may be that the epistle to the Galatians was addressed to these firstfruits of the Pauline husbandry.² The preaching was in the syna-

¹ So Cod. B. in Acts xi. 20. It is difficult for one fresh from the reading or the iterated reading of Hort's Introduction to accept "Ἑλληνας here in place of Ἑλληνιστάς. Keep the strongly attested Ἑλληνιστάς and learn from it how deep the roots of Christianity were in the old orthodoxy, how terrifying the persecution about Stephen had been, how this explains 1 Thess. ii. 14, 2 Cor. xi. 26, Galatians and Hebrews, and what point it adds to Acts xiii. 46, xviii. 6, and S. Paul's repeated pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

² Strictly speaking Galatia was a northern district first visited by Paul on his second journey (if then) before he crossed from Troas into Macedonia. The South Galatian theory, advocated by Sir William Ramsay, makes Acts and Epistles fit together with almost suspicious neatness, and it allows an early date—even before 1 and 2 Thessalonians—for Galatians. But though affinity with Romans does not prove Galatians to be more close in time to Romans than 1 and 2 Corinthians are (as Lightfoot argued), the depth and maturity of Galatians does almost prove it a later utterance than are the simple letters to the Thessalonians. If then Galatians falls into the same group as Corinthians and Romans, that is all we need care about: whether it went north or south matters little. See Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire* (1893) and *St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen* (1895), and his *Historical Commentary on the Galatians* (1899). The whole question is fully discussed in *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul, their*

gogue. The liberal 'God-fearers,' or as we might call them 'catechumens' of Judaism, were addressed together with the regular Jewish churchmen.¹ Luke gives a pretty full summary of one of the sermons. Old Testament prophecy leads up to the resurrection of the Lord, and the assurance of forgiveness and righteousness through him which had been vainly sought in the law. But opposition arose, and the turning point in the narrative is when Paul and Barnabas took their courage in both hands (xiii. 46) and said, 'To you it was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken. Since ye thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of the life eternal, behold we turn to the Gentiles.' From this point all is throbbing movement. There is danger, violence, heroism, fortitude. The Gentiles rejoiced and glorified the word of God. The missionaries returned to Antioch, leaving Gentile churches founded. They had 'fulfilled the work' to which they had been appointed. A battle remained to be fought at home, and a theology to be worked out. But the door was opened to the whole world of men. Free salvation, the first article of the Pauline creed, was established.

According to Acts the battle at home broke out at once, and fiercely: then substantial agreement was quickly reached. The converts from the Pharisees

motive and origin, by Kirsopp Lake (Rivingtons, 1911). This is a masterly introduction to the epistles of the missionary period and also to Acts, setting early Christianity in the movement of the age of its birth, and dispersing many prejudices in the light of keen and very modern scholarship. *Prolegomena*, the first instalment of a Commentary on Acts, edited by Professor Kirsopp Lake and F. J. Foakes Jackson, are shortly to be published by Messrs. Macmillan.

¹ For these 'God-fearers' see Kirsopp Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of S. Paul*, pp. 37 ff. If the Hellenistic Jews within the synagogue had already affinities with the Gospel, these Gentiles who worshipped with the Jews and took a rule of life from them, smoothed the approach both to the synagogue and on the other hand to the Gentile world. The 'God-fearers' swelled that moderate party in the church to whom the faith meant chiefly righteousness. From the heart of Judaism and of paganism came others to whom it rather meant redemption. But the distinction is little more than a logical device. No apostolic disciple but would claim both gifts.

resented the boldness of Paul and Barnabas. A council was held at Jerusalem. S. James and the apostles were strong enough to hold the church together. Certain simple conditions were laid down. These observed, the admission of Gentiles was allowed without circumcision or elaborate obedience to the law. Luke records difficulties which beset Paul from the Jews in his later journeys, but it would hardly seem that he meant Jewish converts within the church, until the last visit to Jerusalem when the old jealousy broke out again. In S. Paul's epistles we get a different point of view. The conditions laid down were mainly ritual. It is true that the so-called western text makes them moral not ritual, and this would square with S. Paul's treatment in 1 Corinthians of the problem of the food offered to idols. For he never refers to any authoritative rule, and does not make his own rule quite in accordance with the decree. But whatever may be said for the western text on the proper grounds of scientific textual criticism, this more subjective test may easily be turned against it. To S. Paul the council does not appear to have been a matter of the first importance. In Galatians he almost certainly alludes to his visit to Jerusalem on that occasion. But no one would suppose from what he writes that he had attended such a formal and impressive gathering at all. He insists on his recollections being exact. So they may well be, but he does not recollect a good deal which had seemed exceedingly interesting to S. Luke's informants. What he recollects is his independence of the control of other apostles. He had certain direct revelations and the other apostles acknowledged their validity. Now it is by revelation, inspiration, divinely given insight into great principles of holiness and charity and community of life in Christ that he settles the line the Corinthians are to follow concerning food offered to idols. There can be no doubt that 1 Corinthians is more grandly inspired than the Jerusalem decree. We may conjecture that as the mission to the

Gentiles expanded, and Paul's faith unfolded into large theology, the decree was recognised by its very framers as inadequate, and rescinded or tacitly dropped. But S. Paul is not much concerned with that piece of history. He had pressing duties laid upon him: revelations, compulsions of the Spirit, ardours of anxious love for brethren for whom Christ died. And it is possible he did not render sufficient observance to the authority of the Jerusalem church. What is authority? What is 'the' church? It may well be that those questions were already troublesome. It is evident from his letters that there was a party in the church which disliked and hindered him. And if it came to parties, he took a side boldly. His side was liberty. He believed it was Christ's. The great apostles believed it too: they were not his opponents: they refused to allow the opened door to be shut again. But they did not follow Paul any more than he them. Their conversion had not been the same break with old tradition as S. Paul's had been. They held fast to unity but claimed variety within the unity.

And here is the clue to the superficial discrepancy between Acts and Paul's epistles. Facts are not manipulated in Acts for the author's purpose. He exercises his judgement on the best evidence he can get, and for the most part attains very fair accuracy. But his informants were not all Paulinists and he himself was a scholar and not a party man. Hence the proportions of things are differently felt in Acts and in the epistles, and for want of complete knowledge of the details we sometimes trip at what seems to come near to contradiction. We ought, however, to remember that this inconvenience witnesses to the freedom and richness of early church life, not to the laxity of early church records.

After another stay at Antioch Paul proposed to visit the churches he had founded with Barnabas. Silas however, not Barnabas, accompanied him. The journey was prolonged and they were guided by "the Spirit

of Jesus'—note how the true reading in Acts xvi. 7 corresponds with the theology of the Pauline epistles—north and west till they reached Troas. In a vision Paul heard a man of Macedonia praying him to 'Come over and help us,' and so the second missionary journey made its wider sweep through Macedonia and Achaia, the northern and southern provinces of Greece. Neapolis, Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, then Athens and Corinth were entered. At Corinth the first of the letters we now read were written, the first and second epistles to the Thessalonians.

In Greece, as in Asia and afterwards when he reached Rome, Paul approached the Jews first. At Corinth, as before at Pisidia, he turned from their obstinacy to the Gentiles (Acts xviii. 6). Jewish opposition had however been particularly fierce at Thessalonica, and the first letter was sent to cheer his converts in the persecution they had to face. The message is brave, affectionate, and simple. Behind it lies the plain doctrine that Jesus is the Christ whom the ancient church expected; the Son whom the Father had sent to save his children from the wrath to come; and they are steadfastly to wait for his advent in glory. This advent was certain because God had raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. Thus we see how naturally (if that be the proper word) Paul's creed, which is the infant church's creed, springs out of the Galilean Gospel, just as the Galilean Gospel had sprung naturally out of Judaism. What this epistle adds is an answer to a question which the Thessalonians had put as to the state of those who should have fallen asleep—the Christian church had adopted this beautiful idea from the Jewish—before the great day. S. Paul answers the question in the pictorial language of the apocalypses, only transmuting their luxuriance into a terse gravity. 'We who survive will not leave the sleepers behind. The Lord, with a proclamation with archangel's voice and trump of God, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first: then we

the living and surviving together with them will be whirled away in clouds into air to our meeting with the Lord. And so shall we be ever with the Lord' (1 Thess. iv. 15 ff.). The letter ends with counsels of quiet and industry: let them wait and work and love one another till the great day shall come, and meanwhile let them not be anxious about the date of its coming.

Compare with this the naïve inquiry with which Acts opens (i. 6), the apostolic sermons in the early chapters of Acts, S. Paul's sermon even to an audience which was not Jewish at Athens (Acts xvii. 31),¹ and so realise how vividly the hope of the Lord's advent filled the minds of the first generation. If we were asked to-day, What is the Christian hope? we might hesitate between alternatives: not so the early Christians. And therefore it is not surprising to find that in spite of S. Paul's advice the Thessalonians were impatient and excited. A second letter had to be addressed to them. In this he starts at once from the advent hope, drawing encouragement therefrom for their present trial and checking their restlessness by setting forth the doctrine, no doubt traditional among Jews, of the prior revelation of 'the man of sin.' Precepts are added, more definite than before, for quiet orderly working life. The final greeting is in S. Paul's own handwriting, a sign, he says, of all his true epistles. He had alluded (ii. 2) to pretended letters, or quotation from letters, 'as from us,' and it is one of the little ironies of criticism that these touches have been fastened upon as themselves liable to suspicion in a professedly early letter of his.

¹ This apocalyptic seriousness is the culmination to which the whole sermon leads. And herein we recognise perhaps a sufficient answer to those who compare the structure of the sermon with the conventional speeches of the Greek romances of the time. Luke has composed his notes in the accustomed plan, but the substance of which he makes notes is quite uncommon. See *Agnostos Theos, Untersuchungen zur Formen-geschichte religiöser Rede*, von Eduard Norden (Teubner, 1913), with Burkitt's review in *J.T.S.*, April 1914.

From Corinth S. Paul crossed to Syria and went to Ephesus. Two missionary journeys had now been made in widening circuits from Antioch. A third from Ephesus was presently to bring him to Rome. But it began by a 'confirming' tour through the Galatian and Phrygian country (Acts xviii. 23), which may mean that southern Galatia—the Roman province so called—where his first churches had been founded: or it may mean that after Phrygia new ground was taken in the ancient Galatia of the north. Then came a long stay again at Ephesus, two years and more.

During these years the first epistle to the Corinthians was written. This is no longer in the simple style of the letters to the Thessalonians. But it has a plain directness which links it in a manner with the early way of writing: one point after another needs to be treated, and is treated distinctly and successively. More noticeable is the prominence of the early advent interest. All works up to the great fifteenth chapter on the advent and the resurrection, a proper sequel to the brief dogmas in Thessalonians, but like all the rest of this epistle so rich and profound. And the conclusion of all is the weighty watchword, *Maran atha*, 'Come, Lord' (cf. Apoc. xxii. 20). The Aramaic language as well as the signification of this watchword still indicate the first stage in Pauline theology.

According to his custom S. Paul begins with thanksgiving. Then after reminder of the advent hope, he at once rebukes the Corinthians for their divisions into sects or parties. But his rebuke is a remonstrance. His remedy is good theology, and his good theology is rich theology, every sentence in his onward pregnant utterance letting loose unsuspected thought. A seveneenth-century writer says, 'Of all the Holy Writers S. Paul is most hard to be understood; who sometimes comes to a full stop before he has done. Gagnejus speaks of his obscure stile which (as many think) that Apostle did expressly affect . . . But that Apostle in that did the rather follow his Spirit, which represented

to him many things at once.’¹ The emphasis on the cross of Christ is especially to be noticed. It comes at once and is iterated. Perhaps he had lately written about this to the Galatians, perhaps he is still to write to them as well as to the Romans. Anyhow here is a Pauline note which has sounded little hitherto, but still gathers volume. He goes on to wisdom and foolishness, apostolic trials and weakness, strength and authority.

One of the Corinthians had committed a grave sin. This case is now considered. Excommunication is threatened, which means deliverance to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, but that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Lawsuits, purity, and marriage are then dealt with. And again a new note sounds in ‘Ye were bought with a price.’ Then comes the question of food which has been offered to idols, as so much of the food publicly sold or hospitably used would be in Corinth. And the answer runs out into ‘ascetic theology,’ temperance like an athlete’s, into the essential hatefulness of idolatry, the sacredness of Christian meals. And through all this, as through the whole epistles, the principle of charity: ‘Let no one seek his own, but each the other’s good,’—‘the brother for whom Christ died.’

Women are to cover the head in prayer and prophe-sying. Reasons are given; among others a curious bit of rabbinic fancy such as not unfrequently startles us in this group of epistles. But tradition, the custom of the churches, settles the question. This leads to another point in worship, the eucharistic feast, which is still combined with the eating and drinking of a common meal. The profound reality is insisted upon with which the Lord had filled the sacrament by his words of institution. Those words are not quoted exactly as they stand in any of the Gospels. The addition ‘Do this in remembrance of me’ seems to have been made by the church for its liturgical re-enact-

¹ Richard Simon, *A Critical History of the text of the New Testament*, ii. p. 91 (London, 1689).

ment of the rite. The Lord's words have been preserved in the Gospel: his meaning and intention have been brought out by the worshippers. As so often, the written letters guard past history, the Spirit in them interprets the future. But this Corinthian worship is still primitive. 'The Lord's supper' is like 'the Lord's day' in Apoc. i. 10, an apocalyptic phrase; and as in the three Gospel records emphasis lies on the 'till he come.'

Directions follow concerning spiritual gifts; tongues, prophecy. The argument is cut into two parts by the praise of charity in xiii., the first of those outbursts of the Pauline rhetoric of the heart which are as good as signatures to all the subsequent epistles. As in the rest of these the rhetoric is shot through with philosophy: *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*. Then the argument returns to prophecy, to reasonable worship, to the unity in variety of the organic body. Once more the apostle turns to the women; they are to keep silence in the assemblies. And he closes with assertion of authority,—all this is the Lord's command; and with a protest against eccentricity.¹

¹ xiv. 38. The R.V. margin represents the best attested reading. But 'if any man knoweth not he is not known' is so ambiguous that the revisers were not ill advised in keeping 'let him be ignorant' in their text. S. Paul however is educing a retributive principle from the nature of things: eccentricity must issue in loneliness. And it is worth notice how he, so independent and original, embraces so genially the order of the whole. Whilst studying the epistles for the writing of this chapter I have read Ward's *Life of Cardinal Newman* again, and the sense, which Newman's sonnet on S. Paul excites, of likeness between the apostle and his disciple is reinforced. At bottom Newman's conception of the church is S. Paul's. To Paul the minor Jewish, as to Newman the medieval superstitions are absorbed in the full stream of church faith and life. Both hate intellectualism and hold fast by reason. There is the returning sympathy for a passionate yearning for the brothers of the old communion. The wrath together with the love of God: apostolic lowliness with authority: originality with reverence for traditional order: sensitiveness even fierceness with an almost clinging gentleness: outbursts of rhetoric and fastidious restraint and unwearying pains for accurate detail: in and through all the clear recognition of the supernatural, together with patient apprehension of ever changing and progressive correspondence of the super-

The subject of the magnificent fifteenth chapter is the resurrection. Christ's resurrection is admitted: S. Paul reviews briefly the church's evidence for its tradition, including the appearance of the risen Lord to himself. But some are saying there is no resurrection of the dead generally, and Christ's resurrection cannot be unless the whole belief in resurrection be accepted which the Christian church has inherited, with the rest of the advent doctrine, from the Jewish church. But Christ has fulfilled with ampler moral sufficiency the ancient doctrine. He died for our sins, he rose, and he will come. His coming will however be but the first act of the drama of 'the end,' which will issue in 'God all in all.' Then man's destined change will be completed. He will be fully clothed with that spiritual body which is not the material flesh and blood, but another vehicle even now being formed in righteousness. Only in terms of character, of righteousness, does Paul ever explain the spiritual body, and only when we look on to 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians do we understand what seems the abrupt close of this chapter. Christ who died for our sins made this righteousness possible by his victory, superseding law, which could not effect it.¹

The epistle closes with appeal for alms for the saints, *i.e.* at Jerusalem, sketch of S. Paul's future movements, greetings, and the watchword Maran atha, 'our Lord cometh' or 'Come, Lord,' followed by the 'Grace of the Lord.'

natural to fresh knowledge and successive needs and perils :—Newman was no S. Paul and no doubt others have followed S. Paul at least as closely, but the list of coincidences might be made a long one, and they seem to be coincidences, not conscious imitations. Indeed Newman speaks rather little of S. Paul; so much oftener of Christ and the Gospels.

¹ Cf. 2 Cor. v. 1-10; Eph. iv. 22 ff., Col. iii. 1 ff., iii. 12; also Phil. iii. 20 f., Rom. vi. 6, viii. 9 ff.; and Dr. J. O. F. Murray in *Church Quarterly Review*, April 1916, on 'The Empty Tomb, the Resurrection Body and the Intermediate State'; also a paper on 'The Ascension and Whitsunday' by Father R. M. Benson, reprinted from 'The Life beyond the grave' in *The Cowley Evangelist*, May 1915.

This letter for all its power and pains did not settle the 'puffed-up' mind of the Corinthians. They rebelled against S. Paul, treated him with cruel ingratitude, and fell away from holiness in their perverse sympathy with one or more moral offenders whose penitence or punishment he insisted upon. The years at Ephesus were sadly troubled. Besides the Corinthian grief he had another cause for anxiety in his Galatian churches whose purity of faith was disturbed by Judaisers virulent in their opposition to him. And at Ephesus things went so ill that at last he was compelled by a serious riot to depart. So at least we gather from Acts xix., xx. S. Paul himself refers to the risk lately run in Ephesus, but only speaks of his departure as it bore on his relations with Corinth. This is in 2 Corinthians. He had sent a severe, a 'grievous' letter thither, and he had at some time paid a second visit himself. It is just possible that the severe letter has been amalgamated in the Pauline Corpus with the third letter. If so our 2 Cor. x.-xiii. 10 is the second letter, in whole or part; the rest of 2 Corinthians is the third.¹ But this is conjecture; 2 Cor. x.-xiii. 10 is not the very grievous thing one would expect from Paul's description of it; and the chapters might be quite needful where they stand before the happy farewell of the happy third letter. Corinth was reconciled, yet all things may not have been quite well yet. Corinth had nigh broken S. Paul's heart. He was shrewd as well as generous, faced facts, and knew that the reconciliation would hardly be quite unanimous. He did not mean to have the weary business all over again through the obstinacy of a few.

This was the position when the third letter was despatched. Titus had been sent to Corinth. He seems to have been a strong character on whom S. Paul relied in more than one strait: the epistle to Titus

¹ See *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, a study personal and historical of the date and composition of the Epistles*, by Gerald H. Rendall, B.D., Litt.D., etc. (Macmillan, 1909).

reveals just such another difficult commission. Paul leaving Ephesus was shaping his own course towards Corinth. He met Titus in Macedonia bringing back good news. Full of thankful love, he wrote again to his recovered children.

He blesses God for his consolation and preservation: recalls his anxiety about Corinth and rejoices at Titus' glad return. Now, he says, let the repentant offender of whom he had written so severely, be freely forgiven and consoled.

Generosity, consolation, confidence, is the temper of the whole epistle. He declares that he has fresh confidence in the apostolic ministry. It is new, spiritual, free, glorious. Yet the glory is carried in earthy vessels, and he muses on the waning of the mortal body, and of that new body with which he longs to be 'clothed upon,' the tabernacle from heaven into which he more and more transfers his daily life.

And this idea of spiritual life soars and circles as, in great yearning for the Corinthians, he sees Christ, who died 'one for all,' no longer 'after the flesh,' that is as men untouched by spiritual experience estimate the mystery of life, but all spiritual and sacramental: God in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and the apostles exercising this ministry of reconciliation, bearing and daring all weariness and dishonour for so great an end.

He repeats his joy in the return of Titus: 'I rejoice that in everything I have confidence in you': then passes to an eager exhortation to liberality in the collection for the saints. One almost smiles to see how tender he is of his so lately offended friends' feelings. He is not quite sure of them here, and he has been a little rash in boasting among the Macedonians of their assured liberality: S. Paul's surprise at stinginess in money matters is always naïve and fresh. He deals gently, cleverly, sublimely with them. He is sending Titus and other brethren, 'apostles of the churches, the glory of Christ,' and everything will be done in a business-

like way, but let them think of the loving poverty of our Lord Jesus and of the ineffable bounty of God.

Then (x.) he asserts for the last time his authority with apostolic paradox: 'I myself Paul exhort you (it is the same word in his Greek which has hitherto meant 'console') by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.' He tells how he supported himself in Corinth, giving no handle to detractors. He steeps his words once more in sacramental thought of the eternal and invisible so strangely manifested in the temporary and visible (cf. iv. 18), the thought that informs this whole epistle. So he speaks of apostolic suffering and power; of trial, anxiety, and the care of all the churches, but also of visions of eternity; of bodily infirmity and divine grace: 'My grace sufficeth thee; for power is perfected in weakness.'

It is a remarkable letter. Except for the appeal for the collection S. Paul has nothing definite to write about. It is just an overflowing of joy and thankfulness and love. But with this impulse his faith flows free and deep as hardly ever before. In 1 Corinthians he expounds—in wealthy commentary indeed—the church's tradition. In 2 Corinthians he opens the personal treasury of his own heart and shows himself strong in weakness as being supernaturally one with Christ, always losing and finding himself again in Christ, and every day more aware of the wonder of a world and a course of events which is the revelation of Christ. The full meaning of the doctrine of Spirit (which he received in Judaism and ratified in the Christian church) seems to be possessing him with more inward force and more intelligible clarity.

This doctrine is the main appeal in the epistle to the Galatians.¹ Whether this was written before,

¹ Lightfoot's Commentaries on Galatians, Philipppians, Colossians, and Philemon (Macmillan) are still of immense value. The grasp on history, exact feeling for language; the paraphrases and essays; the largeness and thoroughness, make these books classics. To work through one of them would be as good an introduction as could be devised for serious study of the Greek Testament.

between, or after the epistles to the Corinthians cannot be settled. Judaisers within the church had tampered with the faith of the Galatians, perverting the Gospel they had received from Paul, and setting them against his authority. This was an additional trouble in so troubled a time. It involved a problem which we learn from Acts xv. had been raised as soon as Paul's mission to Gentiles began, but hitherto the letters we have received give scarce a hint of it. Now in this epistle to the Galatians we find him striking his blow, at once and hard, for the freedom of the Spirit against the bondage of the flesh. By 'the flesh' he means the tyranny of the commonplace and material in religion, superstitious anxiety about outward ordinances, which is the very opposite to that sacramental view of the outward and visible which 2 Corinthians exemplifies. 'Once,' he writes, 'as heathens, not knowing God ye were slaves to so-called gods which the very nature of things prove to be no gods at all. Now having known God, or rather being known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you would over again enter into slavery? Ye observe months and seasons and years. I fear for you lest it be that I have spent my toil on you in vain' (iv. 8 ff.). The proper meanings of theology and religion, knowing God and obligation to rule and rite, have been ignored in our popular antithesis of intellectual theology and religion of the heart. The true antithesis is S. Paul's argument to the Galatians. Faith, self-transforming gratitude and love and trust in God the Father through his dear Son Jesus Christ who died for sinners, has superseded the *Do ut des* of paganism and Jewish legalism and all dry law wherever found. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*. The strong and lovely fruit of the Spirit can never ripen if the worn-out superstition is allowed in Christ's people. They are a new creation: by Spirit they live and by Spirit they must walk.

The passionate note of faith vibrates through the

opening salutation: ' . . . God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord, who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us out of the present world with all its superincumbent weight of evil.' Then the remonstrance abruptly starts with 'I marvel at your perversity,' instead of the usual 'I thank God.' Then the apostle establishes his apostleship by the history of his conversion and of the direct revelation he had received. That leads to the disputes which had arisen between him and Cephas (as he calls S. Peter) and Barnabas about Gentile freedom from the Law, and so to the antithesis of Law and Christ. And all this culminates in that battle-cry of Paulinism (ii. 19 ff.): 'I through law died to law that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. And I live, no longer I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.' The phrase baffles translation. Paul's faith but begins as 'trust in' Jesus Christ. It intertwines with the faith of Jesus Christ himself in the Father. It is the condition, almost an aspect of, the Christ life into which the life of self has been transformed. But no explanations will suffice. If we would understand S. Paul, his life and creed, we must take this passage as the ideal to be always closer approached by reason and morality, though still it moves onward and beyond our grasp: a palmary example of New Testament inspiration.

The argument proceeds. At least the Holy Spirit whom the Galatians received is reality. Are they to turn from that, by a new conversion, to material ordinances? Is not the Spirit 'by faith'? What was Abraham's faith and the promise to Abraham? The promise was Christ, and that is far more primitive and venerable than the temporary discipline of the Law. In the faith of Jesus Christ free righteousness is promised and fulfilled.

The Law has come in to be a tutor conducting to Christ. In Christ there is now freedom and sonship.

God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. But now it is all seasons and ceremonies again with you, my little children with whom I am again in travail till Christ be formed in you.

A legal proof of the argument is ironically drawn (according to the new fashion in Galatia) from the allegory of Isaac and Ishmael. It is not circumcision that is wanted but faith working through love. A fine way, says S. Paul, these Judaisers take to avoid the scandal of the cross to which Jews are so sensitive (cf. 1 Cor. i. 23): circumcision indeed, they had better adopt brutal mutilation.

Away with all this. There is a rule of service which is perfect freedom, the rule of love, and that is yours. Be servants to one another. And the way to attain such happiness is to walk by Spirit. This external material flesh-religion issues in all manner of strife and evil. Those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh in their conversion. Forgive, bear, forbear, be generous, however others act. You are the men of Spirit, you can do this.

Let Judaisers pride themselves in party: the apostolic boast is in the cross. There is a new creation, the Israel of God, on which be peace.

Henceforth I am immune to all attacks: I bear the brand of Jesus on my body.

His grace be with your spirit, my brothers. Amen.

‘Brothers’: thus the severity of the whole epistle is tempered at the end, comments Bengel. But indeed for some pages Paul has been soaring up beyond the controversy and the pain. Perhaps the Galatian apostasy was the final trial. Perhaps Corinth and the Ephesian mob were still to make the ‘branding’ deeper. But whatever the order of the other epistles in this group, Romans undoubtedly comes last. And Romans was surely written with a quiet mind which had been made to triumph in Christ over fears and sorrows; perhaps during the leisure of the three winter months spent in Hellas (Acts xx. 2 f.).

It is a sequel to the sudden heart cry to the Galatians on law and gospel, flesh and Spirit. But it is more than that. It is a treatise with marshalled argument, and spontaneous but carefully placed appeals, and in it all the penetrating thoughts, the revelations of the mind of Christ, are gathered and deepened, which have but flashed through the earlier letters. It is a deliberately planned preparation for a visit to Rome already determined upon (Acts xix. 21; cf. xxii. 21, xxiii. 11) and divinely ordained.¹

The elaborate salutation is not addressed to the faithful in Rome as to a church. But there is a tone of warm affection, 'beloved of God, called to be saints,' and with a kind of extravagance not used before Paul calls himself the 'slave of Jesus Christ' (cf. Phil., Tit., and 'prisoner' in Philemon). And the salutation is a creed: God's gospel of the eternal Son, incarnate, risen, and in the resurrection defined as Son through the Spirit of holiness; and all by prophecy of Scripture.

'First I give thanks': the Romans' faith, Paul's prayer and yearning: he would share with them the gospel of righteousness through faith: then the argument is introduced.

He describes the wrath of God upon the pagan world. Yet Jew as well as Gentile are culpable and both may find mercy. The Jew has his prerogative, but it has proved vain for actual righteousness. The Law wakes conscience and prepares for justification by the faith of Christ. This faith is the continuation of the faith of Abraham and issues in the believer being accounted righteous.

The short creed follows of those who believe on him

¹ Sanday and Headlam's Commentary in Clark's International Critical Series should by all means be studied. This admirable work made (in 1897, 1st ed.) a new era in commentaries. Hort's *Prolegomena to St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians* (Macmillan, 1895) may also be mentioned here. A good Commentary on a smaller scale is Dr. R. St. John Parry's in the *Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges*.

who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead: who was given up for our transgressions and was raised for our righteousness.

Then a prayer upon the creed: Having been justified therefore let us from faith have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through the death of Christ God's love has been shown and is richly effective. It brings in the reign of righteousness; which the Law had not done, though it did end the reign of death—the awakened conscience no longer submitted to that tyranny.

Baptism into Christ is into his death to share his life. The death is of the 'body of sin,' the 'mortal body': the free gift of God is 'eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Inward strife was roused by the Law; deliverance came through Jesus Christ. His Spirit is his very self in us, infusing life into our mortal bodies.

This first division of the epistle ends with a burst of praise and universal hope: Brothers—in Christ, of Jesus Christ—what a debt and what a hope: counted righteous, free from fear, we hope for nothing less than glory. And the hope is for all creation (cf. John i. 3 f.). The Spirit breathes through all created life, and inter-living with our spirit makes intercession beyond our capacity to express. All is the love of Christ from whom no powers of death or life can separate us.

In the second division (which begins in chapter ix.) Paul first passionately declares, then closely argues, his hope for his Jewish brethren. Their present rejection is for the sake of the Gentiles. Their recovery will be life from the dead. And they shall be recovered. The gathering in of the Gentiles will be fulfilled, and then 'all Israel shall be saved.' And again he ends with an outburst of faith and praise: 'O the depth of the richness both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God: how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past tracing out . . . from him and through him and unto him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.'

With chapter xii. the third division begins in which the new life is described both within the brotherhood, and in its relations towards those without. All is love fulfilling the new law.

The strong must bear with the weak and help them. What are fashions in food and ceremonies? How easy it is to keep unity in variety. Christ himself has become a minister of circumcision for God's truth in order to bring Jew and Gentile together. May the God of patience, comfort, and hope fulfil his people's joy.

Finally S. Paul, the priest of the Gentile sacrifice, going to Jerusalem with Gentile alms for the Jewish brethren, asks Roman prayers, and proposes to visit Rome, and after Rome, Spain. And he prays the God of peace to be with the Romans.

Here we seem to have reached the close of the epistle. But a long list of greetings is appended, with a rather peremptory warning against schisms. Then comes the customary 'Grace of the Lord'; a postscript of greetings from, not to (as in the long list) the persons named, among whom is Tertius 'who wrote the epistle'; and a stately epilogue which has considerable resemblance to some of the grand liturgical passages in the Pastorals.

Varieties of reading—the uncertain position of the 'Grace' for instance—suggest that the epistle has been revised once or again at the end. Some critics conjecture that the chapter of greetings with its severe message about schisms is a note, or a part of an epistle to Ephesus, which has been attached to Romans in the formation of the Pauline Corpus. There is not very much in the objection that S. Paul would not have known so many persons in Rome. Nor perhaps is Lightfoot very conclusive on the other side when he finds nearly all the names among the burial inscriptions of early Rome. Still those names are facts, and the objection is but conjecture. And if S. Paul could send

this elaborate and weighty treatise to Rome at all, it would seem likely that he knew enough Christians in Rome to assure an audience. He was sanguine, but anxiously so, about his visit, and it at least gratifies imagination to see in the list a little company of friends who were working there on his behalf—on behalf of his Gospel.

The richness of God's wisdom and knowledge which S. Paul celebrates in xi. 33 was always a wonder in his mind. He expresses it again in Ephesians iii. 10 by a vivid phrase, 'the very varied, the many coloured wisdom of God.' And this richness is reflected in his own thought. That is why his readers admire and love him more and more whole-heartedly as continual study discovers more and more of the whole of him. For like all strong characters he says things which, taken by themselves, repel at first. And for a while our very diligence misrepresents him: we analyse and set his doctrine out under heads, and shape it into systems, and perhaps decide that one of his ideas which has impressed itself strongly upon us, or upon some one generation of men or some one class, is the only key to all he writes. Whereas that simple faith in Jesus as the Christ, the inevitable sequel to his Pharisaic creed, unfolds in continuous evolution and deepens with manifold convolution: it is a life, not a proposition, and no formula can comprehend it, though several good ones have been invented to stimulate imaginative sympathy.

Thus 'justification by faith' has been taken as the heart of Paulinism. The verb translated 'justify' does certainly mean 'account righteous' not 'make righteous.' The force of it is briefly and clearly shown in our Lord's parables of the Publican and the Pharisee (Luke xviii. 10 ff.) and of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 11 ff.).¹ And this free forgiveness, this accounting

¹ In these parables, in the Lord's Prayer and in the Galilean Gospel generally, forgiveness or justification issues simply from God's love. In S. Paul and the rest of the New Testament there is a new emphasis

of the sinner righteous by God for Christ's sake, for his own name's sake (as Ezekiel used to put it) and the peace of conscience which springs from the return of the child to his heavenly Father, is the theme of the first part of Romans and is never absent from Paul's thought. It is the starting point of the new life. But it is not the whole of Paul's doctrine. The oftener he is read the more Matthew Arnold's simplification of Paulinism will be appreciated,¹ that righteousness itself had ever been Paul's master passion, and that through Jesus Christ he found at last the power to be righteous. The being accounted righteous, the reconciliation with the loving Father is the means, the being righteous is the life itself. Only, this too is a simplification which does not cover all. Christ himself is alone that sufficient simplification. There is a metaphysic of holiness in S. Paul—and Matthew Arnold did not care for metaphysic. You are accounted righteous and so you can become righteous: You are forgiven through Christ, now follow Christ's example: these formulae are thin and dry. Justification by faith for Paul is being

on the death and resurrection of Christ. This is a particular aspect of that unfolding of the disciples' love and trust and gratitude into theology which I try to illustrate throughout this book. It may however be treated as a special problem, and so Dr. Rashdall has treated it, very finely, in his Bampton Lectures, *The idea of Atonement in Christian theology* (Macmillan, 1919). Dr. Rashdall shews how much of the formal argument of the apostolic writers rests on the authority of Old Testament prophecy, while their moral appeal is to the life and death of Christ as the supremely moving revelation of God's love and holiness. He concludes, in the spirit of 'Greek theology at its best,' that 'translated into more modern language the meaning of the Church's early creed, "There is none other name given among men by which we may be saved," will be something of this kind: "There is none other ideal given among men by which we may be saved except the moral ideal which Christ taught by His words, and illustrated by His life and death of love: and there is none other help so great in the attainment of that ideal as the belief in God as He has been supremely revealed in Him who so taught and lived and died." So understood, the self-sacrificing life which was consummated by the death upon the Cross has indeed power to take away the sins of the whole world.'

¹ *S. Paul and Protestantism.*

crucified with Christ: becoming righteous is living 'no longer I, but Christ liveth in me.'

Then there is Paul's doctrine of predestination. Not only do we stumble at that in itself, but we even think sometimes that it infects his generous mind all through with discomfiting harshness. We remember S. Augustine, Pascal, and other of the great and good, and half confess that this taint spoils the perfection of them all, and with them even Paul. But read all the epistles through, read Romans through, read but the section of Romans which deals with predestination, but read it through, to the end. The argument is concrete not abstract. It opens grace to the Gentiles, and is a widening not a narrowing. Not Jews only, but all believers of all races, have been ordained to salvation. In the process of extension Jews are excluded themselves, yet for Jews too God's eternal purpose lasts. Finally, 'all Israel shall be saved.' It is true that in this plan Paul, like the ancient prophets, treats of nations and masses, and leaves unexplained the fate of the several souls that meanwhile perish. Yet do they perish? S. Paul, like our Lord, faces the facts of life, and the wrath of God (as in Old Testament language he calls the mystery) is one of the most evident of those facts: the Scriptures are stern, the Gospel was a narrow way, and the Lord Jesus was crucified for sinners who but for his cross must perish. But in 1 Corinthians the offender was to be delivered to Satan that his spirit might be saved. And in 1 Cor. xv. a vista opens, beyond the advent of the judgement, a vista dim with excess of light, in which God shines in ultimate perfection, 'God all in all.'¹

¹ Hell in the New Testament stands to mercy in the proportion of one to a round thousand. In 'eternal punishment' the idea of punishment is more difficult than the eternity. God's will is that all men should be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4). Yet no man can come to the Father except through Jesus Christ (John xiv. 6), and no denials of the stern exclusive things in Scripture and in experience of human nature avail much. But Scripture and human nature are only read with real apprehension by conscience, and while each of us (perhaps) can too

Schweitzer¹ finds the key to S. Paul's mind in his apocalyptic education as a Jew. The Lord Jesus had promised the immediate coming of the kingdom of God, had been acknowledged by the Twelve as the Christ, and had died to bring the kingdom. The apostles and the early church in Jerusalem, daunted indeed by the crucifixion but confirmed in faith by the resurrection, saw therein the assurance of the promise and expected from day to day the coming of the Lord in glory. S. Paul, convinced by Christ's appearing to him outside Damascus, joined the church, adopted its simple faith, and all his own deepening and intense theology was the natural outcome of this. Undoubtedly this does explain the high doctrine of Christ's person and work in S. Paul. There is no passage into 'another kind,' as rationalising critics had supposed, between the Galilean Gospel and S. Paul. The teacher of Nazareth was not thus transformed into the divine pre-existent Son of Paulinism. The teacher in the sermon of the mount was the Son of God, the redeemer of his people, all along. Accepting the resurrection Paul did quite naturally see the culmination of Judaism

well conceive his own eternal perishing, we can only think of this for others in an abstract way. Moreover, the Hebrew prophets abolished that idea of hell and punishment which is intolerable when they opposed the popular horror of Sheol or the Pit with the faith that there is no place or state outside the love of God. Mr. H. B. Wilson's paraphrase of 1 Cor. xv. 24 ff. in *Essays and Reviews* would no longer be condemned as blasphemous, nor (I think) despised as facile universalism: 'And when the Christian Church in all its branches shall have fulfilled its subinary office, and its Founder shall have surrendered His Kingdom to the great Father, all, both small and great, shall find a refuge in the bosom of the Universal Parent, to repose, or to be quickened into higher life, in the ages to come, according to His will.'

The latest and best discussion of this subject is in the Hulsean Lectures for 1918 by Dr. J. O. F. Murray, Master of Selwyn College, which (it may be hoped) will presently be published.

¹ Who wrote on the apocalyptic view of the Gospel: cf. p. 25. His book on S. Paul is *Geschichte der Paulinischen Forschung von der Reformation bis auf die Gegenwart* (Tübingen, 1911). *The relation of S. Paul to contemporary Jewish thought* by H. St. John Thackeray (Macmillan, 1900) shows how Judaism may have influenced S. Paul in other directions also,

in the Christian faith. But here again the simplification is too narrow, too merely logical. Paul's faith is ever moving. It draws nourishment from the ever widening experience of his life. And his life is Christ's own life in which he is absorbed. The impulse is personal and in the noblest sense of the word supernatural. Just as the Lord's resolve to die was a new thing in the old apocalyptic tradition, and his inscrutable knowledge that his death was to be the 'ransom for many' was a divine mystery which ages of Christian experience must unfold to clearer apprehension, so S. Paul's mystical union with his Lord was a new act of God in the education of the world, and it was a personal, particular, and therefore unique influence. Paul's apocalyptic Pharisaism was the conditional circumstance out of which his whole course sprang, but he entered at his conversion on the 'new creation.' His advance upon his education had always been zealous (Gal. i. 14), now it was free. A conversion like his is always a creative interruption. In him the subsequent progress is even more remarkable. Schweitzer pays little attention to the epistles of the captivity, but even within the missionary period this is evident. The apocalyptic way of thinking persists, but it does not seem to be the source of all his thought. Schweitzer points out the apocalyptic element in Paul's words about the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 17 ff.). It is an element and a very important one. But there is something besides. And when Schweitzer argues that the passage in Rom. vi. about baptism shows the same apocalyptic, anticipatory view of sacrament, the conclusion is not obvious. And the change in Paul's manner of writing about the advent is so remarkable that the origin is almost forgotten in the development. In Thessalonians there is the old traditional scenic pomp, restrained but frankly literal. In 1 Corinthians this supplies indeed the solemn rhetoric, but the deep substantial interest is elsewhere; it is in the profound religious philosophy of the Son delivering

up his kingdom, the 'end,' and God all in all; and in the elaboration of the doctrine of resurrection which begins here and progresses through the later epistles. This too starts from Paul's Pharisaic education.¹ 'According to Josephus the Pharisees believed that the souls of good men return to life in other bodies,' that is, they believed in the creation of a new body not the resuscitation of the body of mere flesh and blood. Perhaps the 'obvious resemblance' to 1 Cor. xv. has suggested in this summary of another's summary a more Pauline phrase than Josephus or the Pharisees would have adopted. Anyhow S. Paul's conception goes very far deeper than theirs. He has his vision of the risen Lord, his experience of the immeasurable power of the Lord's Spirit in the faithful and especially in himself, his confidence that nothing can separate them from the love of Christ, his growing realisation of the Spirit by its fruit which is love, joy, peace, etc., the new character which clothes the new-born man. And so, not all at once but by degrees, he gets the idea clear of the Christian freeing himself more and more from the needs and desires and of course the sins of his mortal body of flesh and blood, and being clothed upon more and more with the new spiritual body, the vehicle of the life that is already hid with Christ in God. And this spiritual body will be perfected when Christ comes and changes all the temporal into the eternal. Meanwhile Paul never approaches a description of this new spiritual body except in terms of character. Only we must also notice that he does not profess to give a complete description of it at all, and he sometimes lets drop a phrase (as in Rom. viii. 11) which shows he is aware of the dignity even of the material creation, and he seems to restrain himself purposely from saying anything which would foreclose the question of the ultimate relation of matter to spirit. This however he

¹ See the chapter on 'Thought and practice in Judaism' in *Prolegomena to Acts*, edited by F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake: cf. above, p. 71.

does make plain, that nothing is spiritual but what is moral, and that this truth rules our hopes of eternal life.¹

If Schweitzer simplifies S. Paul too drastically in the direction of apocalyptic Judaism, others have done the opposite, finding that the great contribution he made to Christianity was due to the influence of the 'mystery religions.' Most people have heard of the Eleusinian mysteries in ancient Hellas, and are aware that the Greek 'mysteries' combined with eastern religion played a large part in the devotional life of the later pagan world. The mystery was a drama of life and death and immortality, of purification and new life. There was a ceremony of initiation, often with blood. There was a spectacle and there was a divine meal. We know a good deal more of late about these mysteries than former generations did. Unfortunately most of our evidence comes from a rather later period than S. Paul's.² Waiving that objection however, do we really find much in S. Paul's epistles which proves this foreign influence? There certainly is a good deal of coincidence in language. Yet here one must go cautiously. Read the gnostic writers, or the romance writers of the early centuries, the 'aretalogoi' as they are called. Once you are on the look out for a certain set of words, or certain peculiarities of composition, you will be startled by the frequency of such coincidences. Do they indicate more than the complex sources of the general style of all writers of a given period who do not take pains to practise a literary

¹ Cf. p. 79 above, and the references in the footnote.

² This is brought out by Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain* (Paris, 1909), one of the best books on the whole subject. The following may also be named: Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterien-religionen*, and Poimandres, *Studien zur Griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1904), with an article on 'The Hermetic Writings' in *J.T.S.*, July 1914, by the Rev. J. M. Creed. Dr. Kennedy has discussed the question in a plain manner in his *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, and the subject has been treated afresh by Loisy in *Les mystères païens et le mystère chrétien* (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1919).

style? Still Paul's free use of this 'mystery' phraseology is striking. A curious instance is Col. ii. 18. There are three Greek words here which mean 'walking on things which he has seen.' Later scribes made an attempt at sense by inserting a 'not' so that such a metaphorical meaning could be extracted as we find in our Authorised Version, 'intruding into those things which he hath not seen'; but the ancient text certainly lacked the 'not.' A very slight emendation however, scarcely more than a different distribution of the letters into words, gave the vigorous sarcasm 'windily walking upon air.' The Greek was not quite good, but it would serve; and this or some modification of it was commonly thought probable.¹ But a few years ago Sir William Ramsay found two tablets in a Greek temple in Asia Minor recording initiations into the mysteries. The dedicators use almost the very words of Colossians: 'I have seen: I have walked,' that is 'I have looked upon the sacred drama: I have entered upon the mystic way of life.' The true text of Colossians is decisively proved to be the text we have.

It is of course obvious to remark that S. Paul is disparaging the cult here, not promulgating it in the church. But he has used plenty of this kind of language already in the epistle, professedly adapting it to the Gospel. Now the other side of his practice appears, and it corresponds to what we often observe in the apostolic writings. The Christian people are extravagant, superstitious in the zeal of their devotion: their leaders have to check them. The rebuke of the angel to the seer of the Apocalypse is typical of much. And here may be the right point of view for examining S. Paul's general objection to the mystery religions. There was much in these religions which rendered them preparatory to the Gospel. The idea of redemp-

¹ See Hort's *Introduction to the Greek Testament in the original Greek*, p. 127. Ramsay communicated his discovery to *The Athenaeum* of January 25, 1913.

tion, of mystical union, of new birth was in them. They satisfied for some, and intensified for others the yearning after purity and eternity which the Gospel fully met. Gentile converts brought something with them into Christian worship from their native mysteries, partly enriching if often corrupting thereby the sobriety of the church. S. Paul, 'all things to all men,' quick to understand, assimilate, and eager in sympathy with all ardent minds, did not reject the offering. He recognised in it something he had long known in apocalyptic Judaism; for that was ardent too, and dreamed of spectacle, and taught new birth, and had learned from the Law of Moses that the blood is the life, and God gives it upon the altar to renew spoiled lives (Lev. xvii. 11). And he felt too that one who had seen the risen Lord and knew himself to have been crucified with him and to have risen with him, and now to be living in him, had a true experience in common with these pagans whom God had called. So he encouraged while he discriminated, and he adopted their phrases of piety in his genial ecclesiastic fashion. All this is at least quite probable. What there seems no reason to suppose is that he believed himself mystically one with Christ because pagans or pagan converts put the idea into his head; or that he discovered in the Lord's Supper deep things suggested by the pagan mysteries, which the church had known nothing about, and the Lord had not revealed to him. Paul did not become 'the slave of Jesus Christ' because of the mysteries: he learned something from the mysteries, and his heart went out to the initiates, because, being the slave of Christ, he found there too some breath from his Master's Spirit.¹

¹ This seems the true proportion of things. At the same time the subordinate truth must be recognised which is well expressed in the following words of Dr. Bethune-Baker: 'The background of St. Paul's thought has not yet been sufficiently explored. Ideas of the "seed," and the "garment," and transformation, and divination, played a large part in the popular Hellenistic piety and the philosophical thought with which St. Paul, the Jew and the Christian, was in contact—in

But this discussion has brought us to the epistles of the captivity. From Greece Paul went to Troas, picking up, it seems, Luke at Philippi, who remained with him all through his subsequent adventures. Then by sea they went to Miletus, where Paul parted from the elders of Miletus with the address we read in Acts xx. It was an affecting farewell, and the bold theology of verse 28 witnesses to the accuracy of the reported words: 'Take heed to yourselves and all the flock in which the Holy Spirit set you as overseers (or bishops), to shepherd the church of God which he made his own possession through his own blood.' They reached Jerusalem. The Jews rioted, and Paul was rescued from their fury by the Roman soldiers. But the rescue was an arrest. He was sent to Caesarea, where he was detained a long while and examined before governors and royal persons. In one of these examinations Luke describes the scene with characteristic liveliness (xxiv. 1 ff.). Tertullus, a professional orator, began in pompous language to open the case against Paul. Confused by Felix the governor's indifference to his rhetoric, he involved himself in an endless succession of relative clauses. The Jews, wearied also, break in with 'So he did, so he did.' Tertullus gave up, and the governor nodded to Paul to make his defence, which he did in a plain manly speech. The conclusion of all these examinations was Paul's appeal to Caesar. He was accordingly sent to Rome, and after the perils by sea which are recorded in the incomparable narrative of Acts xxvii., xxviii., he arrived at Rome. He had an interview with the Jews at Rome, and once more, as before in Pisidia and at Corinth, his loyalty to the ancient church was rebuffed, and he turned to the Gentiles. 'They,' he said, '*will* hear.' And so Acts ends with the two years of 'preaching the kingdom

relation to which he often expressed himself. . . . To attribute to him from first to last a systematised and entirely coherent scheme that is all his own is to defend him on lines that can hardly be made good' (*J.T.S.*, October 1919, p. 93).

of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.'

That is borne out by the epistle to the Philippians, which may or may not be the earliest of the four written from the Roman captivity. Its theology is the simplest, and it ends with indignation at a very considerable 'hindrance' arising from Jews or Judaising Christians. This connects it logically with the controversy of Galatians and Romans, but proves nothing about the order of writing. There are in fact no means for arranging these epistles in order of time.

Paul and Timothy, 'slaves of Christ Jesus,' greet all the saints at Philippi with their bishops and deacons. The term 'church' does not occur in the salutations of the captivity except in Philemon, where it hardly bears the technical meaning; it is 'the assembly at thy house.'¹

The letter begins with 'I give thanks.' Paul writes from his bonds: is confident, rejoicing, hopeful till the day of Jesus Christ: he remembers the Philippians in his prayers, and yearns for them in the bowels of affection of Jesus Christ.

All has turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel, Rome listens; the brethren are bold.

By ill-wishers or well-wishers Christ is preached and Paul rejoices. He will die or live as may be; yet is confident that he will live, for his friends' sake. Only be they worthy citizens of Christ's Gospel: their motto 'On behalf of Christ'; no trembling at the athlete's contest, but with one spirit and one soul taking the gospel side.

By all the consolations of Christ, Paul urges them, keep unity: and keep it by the lowly self-emptying spirit of Christ,² who possessing all authority never

¹ Cf. p. 110.

² ii. 7. See articles in the *Journal of Theological Studies* by Mr. J. Ross, July 1909; Mr. W. Warren, April 1911; and Dr. Bethune-Baker, October 1914, for this 'emptying' and 'prize to be snatched at.' The Revised Version, it seems, has not quite caught the point. The idea of our Lord's 'emptying' his humanity of certain properties

used it for himself: so now God of his grace has given him universal dominion.

Trust God then, and work out the salvation initiated; for yourselves and for the poor perverse world. Nothing has been in vain, even if now I am to die as a libation for your still continuing rites of faithful sacrifice. I rejoice, I rejoice with you: rejoice ye, rejoice with me.

I send Timothy and Epaphroditus, so dear and good to me: receive them with a like affection.

Finally, my brothers, rejoice. . . .

But here Paul breaks off in what he is dictating. We can picture the scene. News is brought into the room of some fresh attack upon the apostle's work by the Judaisers. He leaves the sentence unfinished and breaks out with denunciation. The scribe looks up with a smile on his face at the temper—a bit of character which mars the perfection of their master but is dear to them. Then he writes again swiftly, smiling no longer as the fierce words modulate into a still deeper theology and holier richness.

'Ware the dogs, he cries, the spurious circumcision. I am as good a Jew as they. But I have thrown away the trappings of Judaism for how much better a power and progress and hope, the power of Christ's resurrection, good courage to press onward, the hope of glorious transformation when he comes. We are citizens of heaven and shall wear the body of Christ's glory.

So, brothers, my joy and chaplet of victory, stand fast. I repeat my glad farewell—rejoice in the Lord always. The Lord is near at hand. God's peace be with you, the peace that surpasses all our intuitions; and maintain the nobility of your profession.

Greetings to you all from all of us, with gratitude

of divinity which has prevailed since Dr. Gore wrote his essay in *Lux Mundi* is too subtle and precise. S. Paul writes as of the governor of a province. Christ was no rapacious lord, fleecing his subjects, but was extreme in lowliness, emptying himself and caring only for them. 'He considered his equality with God not as an opportunity of self-aggrandisement, but effaced all thought of self and poured out his fullness to enrich others.'

for your message and your liberality. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Joy and confidence ring through Philippians. Imperial Rome seems to have touched S. Paul's imagination. He takes a new metaphor from the great 'city.' The Gospel is to fill the world with heaven as Rome does with civilisation. Meanwhile let the faithful follow the example of Christ and be made like him, More than in his earlier epistle he seems to dwell with loving reverence on the days of the Lord's flesh; one of many affinities which Philippians bears to Hebrews.

Colossians looks rather to Christian glory. Yet not quite in the same manner as before. This epistle is more directly theological. The mystery—that very word is employed—of Christ's person is the subject: the thought of the eternal divine Christ, 'the visible image of the unseen God,' underlies the whole. As three centuries later heresy was the opportunity for the church to make thought clearer by the definition 'consubstantial,' so perhaps Asiatic extravagances of devotion led S. Paul to strike out phrases which guarded against error while they illuminated truth. He does this with a noble freedom, as in spontaneous conversation springing from a rich experience. He makes the proportions of the faith stand out as it were by masterly touches of colour: all is warmth and splendour.

Paul and Timothy salute the faithful in Colossae. We give thanks, they begin, and pray for the faith of the Colossians. And out of this a long sentence winds about their hope for the future and gladness for the past of their friends, for their entrance into the province of the inheritance of the saints in light. Then this deepens into a creed, rich in poetic and sacred associations of phrase, concerning the royal person of the Son of God. The first clause ends with the noticeable title 'the head of the body the church.' Then comes a touch of gnostic language, 'all the pleroma or fulness' is in him; this will get a pregnant

turn in Ephesians. Then the work of redemption and the reconciliation to God of all things in heaven and earth is rehearsed. All is finally applied to the Colossians, who must abide in the gospel which is proclaimed by all creation.

The language is new and old: the piety of the Old Testament reflected back from Gentile devotion—all creation is vocal in the gospel: cf. Ps. xix. 3, xxix. 9; Rom. viii. 19 ff. It is the rhetoric of the Greek liturgies, as in Ephesians, Hebrews, Clement of Rome.¹

And now, S. Paul continues, I rejoice at the publication of our mystery or sacrament, Christ in us the hope of glory. For which I toil and labour; for your sake especially of late. In spirit I am with you, and see with joy your trained and steadfast battle-front of faith towards Christ.

Onward then in Christ. Be not deceived by vain philosophy. What is true in the philosophy of your old world reaches complete expression in Christ. And he has abolished all the dogmatic exclusiveness of Judaism and pagan mysteries. Do not entangle yourselves again with such folly. Away with those poor elements. Ye are risen with Christ. Your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ is manifested ye shall be manifested with him in glory.

Mortify therefore the limbs of your earthly body, the vices of paganism. Put off the old humanity. Clothe yourselves with the new, the ever fresh; the Christlike unity of all nations and classes, the lovely virtue of the new life. And over all put on charity the binding influence of their perfection. Let Christ's peace solve all problems. Be glad and thankful. Wives, husbands, children, slaves, live with affection the fair life of Christ.

Pray and watch; and pray for us and for the publication of our mystery of Christ. Out of bad times buy liberally the opportunity of good.

¹ See below, pp. 152 f.

Tychicus and Onesimus (he is one of us now) will carry this letter and tell you all our news. Your many friends here greet you. I have sent a letter to Laodicea. Get it and send them this. Bid Archippus good cheer in his sacred ministry.

For signature—Remember my bonds. The grace be with you.

With this epistle S. Paul sent a short letter to Philemon, a well-to-do citizen of Colossae, whose slave Onesimus had run away and taken refuge with Paul; had been converted by him to Christ, and now—Onesimus' first step in the narrow way of the Gospel—returns to his master.

Paul the prisoner and Timothy the brother write to their dear Philemon, to his family and to the church in his house. Paul gives thanks for Philemon's goodness to the saints, and for love's sake he the ambassador and prisoner of Christ begs goodness for Onesimus. Paul has begotten him in bonds and now he is a brother and must be treated brotherly. Paul will pay expenses; and he runs on making play with the jargon of accounts, with Onesimus the 'useful man's' name, and before he ends with greetings and grace, he confirms what we have already read in Philippians of his confident hope of release: 'make guest's provision for me, for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.'

The letter is full of sweet unaffected holiness and wit. Yet it is shrewd and strong. Without commanding Paul means to be obeyed. And the letter is not private. It has the formal courtesies of his longer letters and seems to be meant for the whole assembly to hear. And what a good illustration it is of the apostolic attitude to slavery. There is no meddling with the instituted custom, but within the brotherhood master and slave are one. The church did away with the bitterness of slavery at once, and left the politicians to change the law of the state when they would: 'Take no thought for the morrow.' 'Wert thou called being a

slave? care not for it. Nay, if thou even canst become free, use it rather. . . . Put on the new man, where there is no Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but all in all Christ' (1 Cor. vii. 21; Col. iii. 11).

Ephesians is to Colossians what Romans is to Galatians and the two Corinthian letters, an epistolary treatise rather than a personal letter. The treatises are letter-like with no smell of the study, dictated rather than composed, though Ephesians looks as if it had received some final touches from the secretary. Still there is this difference, and Colossians remains unique in the history of doctrine for its bold rough-hewing of dogma, its unpremeditated harmony of head and heart. Yet Ephesians is not a repetition of Colossians, nor Colossians a simplification of Ephesians. They are complementary. Neither stands secure without the other. Colossians pictures the person of Christ. Ephesians deduces the doctrine of Christ's body the church, and shows how the one mystery or sacrament of the person is repeated in the various functions of his body, as for instance in Christian marriage.

Paul the apostle, it begins, with no associated name and with a blank space left for the successive addresses of the circular epistle.

Then 'blessed be God,' as in 2 Corinthians, and in preparation for the 'he that hath blessed us in all spiritual blessing.' For this is the starting point of a long sentence which winds its way as in Colossians but with more careful subtlety of arrangement. Blessing, love, purpose: the beloved, grace, forgiveness, purpose to sum up all in the Christ: the Christ in whom we hoped of old and now have been sealed in faith by the Spirit who is the earnest of inheritance—thus the thought branches and progresses.

Then with the usual thanksgiving S. Paul turns to prayer for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to be given to his friends with knowledge, more personal and direct, of the Lord Jesus. But the prayer passes into

meditation on the Lord's exalted state as head over all things for the church which is his body, the fulness of him who is being all in all fulfilled. You, he goes on, hath God saved by the free bounty of grace, and raised you with Christ, and set you in the heavenly sphere with him, you God's own making, created for good works, prepared of God for us to walk in.

Wherefore remembering your old heathen estate, see now how you have been brought into the polity of the true Israel: in Christ Jesus: all one in him: distinctions and enmities abolished by the cross: all one new humanity: a polity, a temple of God, with Christ Jesus the corner-stone and the Holy Spirit indwelling and informing it with divine life.

For which sake I Paul, on your behalf—again he turns to his prayer, but again the theological thought overflows and postpones it—Indeed you know my apostleship to you Gentiles; that mystery long hidden but now revealed, how the Gentiles are all one with the rest of the church by God's richly varied wisdom. Faint not at my pains for you which are your glory.

And now at last the prayer is ready to take perfect shape. For which sake, it runs, I bow my knees to the Father, the source and type of all fatherhood, praying for your perfection in Christ, your full and steadfast comprehension of his inexhaustible love; and giving glory to him whose liberal omnipotence overpasseth all desire, to him in the church and in Christ Jesus for the generations of the ages of the ages. Amen.

I beseech you therefore to walk worthy of your vocation in gentleness, unity, and love: the Spirit is unity, the practical bond is love: all things divine are one. In unity there is living variety of service: so the body grows, drawing life from Christ the head, and filling up his fulness until all at last is one man mature and perfect.

Therefore you must no longer walk like heathen in whose minds there is no sanctifying faculty. You know Christ now for you know him as Jesus, and in

the human example of Jesus Christ you must put off the old humanity and clothe yourselves with the new, ever renewing youth in the Holy Spirit who fills your mind.

Precepts follow for the Christlike life. There seems to be an echo here from the church's liturgy, Christ the offering and sacrifice, the hymn of life and light (v. 2, 14).

Wives and husbands must live in sacramental love manifesting its original which is Christ's love for the church. Children, parents, slaves, masters must likewise live the lovely life of God.

Such is the glorious inner harmony of the church. But it grows up in a world of spiritual foes, and for the warfare all must arm themselves with the panoply of God, adding to the ancient prophetic armour the great shield of the all-including faith.

Pray for me, Paul concludes, the ambassador in bonds of the gospel mystery. Tychicus will give our news. Peace to the brethren : grace with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

The last line of Ephesians is typical of the whole epistle. It is the same 'Grace of the Lord' as in the earlier epistles, but developed. And the epistle shews a marked developement upon Romans, which represents the earlier group as Ephesians represents the group of the captivity : yet its theology would not be intelligible except as a developement. Nor does this developement seem to have been shaped in another mind at a later time than Paul's. The whole of the two series of epistles are too vitally knit together. Compare Ephesians with the rest, then do the same with Hebrews, and you feel this strongly. More facts are observable than the theory of a second author will cover.

The conspicuous novelty is in the final emphatic word *aphtharsia* (Vulgate, *incorruptio*). It is best explained from 1 Cor. xv. 53, 'this corruptible must

put on incorruption (*aphtharsian*) and this mortal immortality.' It echoes and sums up a phrase which S. Paul repeats five times in Ephesians (i. 3, 20; ii. 6; iii. 10; vi. 12), and which may be paraphrased 'in the heavenly sphere.' The link with 1 Cor. xv. shows that he has the great advent in mind, but the whole context of Ephesians shows that his thought about the advent has moved forward. The very simple faith of the early church, as represented in the opening chapters of Acts, was this: Jesus is the Christ; now in heaven; soon to come from heaven in the glory of the kingdom, to end the earthly order, and to take the faithful to heaven. Acts also shows that the Spirit of Jesus Christ in the faithful was a second article of faith, closely connected with the hope of the advent. In S. Paul we find the Spirit as the inspirer of a new life which the faithful already live with Christ, or rather in Christ, anticipating as it were their exaltation to heaven. 'As it were' is a right condition of the statement, for all is highly pictorial; things ineffable are with a solemn grandeur symbolised in metaphors of space and time. So they are all through the writings of S. Paul. Herein lies one main difference between Paul and John. But S. Paul presses attention more and more to the Spirit; strips away more and more of the merely traditional scenery. And with this enlargement goes another. The advent moves into the vaster future. Already he had bidden the Thessalonians not to be excited and restless as though the day of Christ's coming could be foretold. In 1 Corinthians the coming stretches out into a far wider 'end.' Now in Ephesians he contemplates, it seems, a long vista of growth, the gathering in of multitudes, the maturing of their faith through increasing knowledge.

It may be that S. Paul, always quick to feel the mind of Christ in things without as well as within, was stimulated by Rome. In Rome, the centre, he realised the extending influence of the empire, the Roman law and civilisation moulding the world, filling it as with

growing life. And he accepted the sign. Such great patient work still awaited the Gospel. Christ would 'come,' but all mankind must be prepared for his coming.

And if so, he was aided from other sides to evolve the conception. The quarrel of Jew and Gentile within the brotherhood of the saints was not indeed quite stilled: the conclusion of Philippians proves that. But Philippians as a whole combines with Ephesians to assure us that at least a new stage had been reached: the old watchwords of the parties were stale; that was no longer the burning question. And as that quarrel died out a fuller idea of unity became possible; not bare unity as of one party's victory, or by compromise, but unity fulfilled in variety. And that is one main strand of the argument in Ephesians.

But it is interwoven with other strands. Or rather that metaphor is too material, too dead. Each current of the argument is living thought, each deepens as it flows, divides into further life, is lost and found again in living union with the others. Thus this unity in variety corresponds to the one, yet very varied wisdom of God. And this compound idea again meets the already well-known Pauline phrase 'in Christ,' and fills it with increased significance.

'Christ' is the Greek for the Hebrew 'Messiah': both mean in English 'The anointed.' Wherever we find in our English version of the Old Testament 'The LORD's anointed,' 'His anointed,' etc., the Hebrew has 'The LORD's Messiah,' the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate have 'The LORD's Christ,' etc. For the Jewish, the Greek, and the Roman churches the Old Testament is literally full of Christ. But only once (Dan. ix. 25) does the title stand by itself: the typical form is 'The LORD's anointed or Christ'; and it is used of the reigning king, sometimes of priests, sometimes (as in Ps. lxxxix. 51) of the people of Israel as a whole. Hence we see the point of those quotations in the first chapter of Hebrews: 'Christ' was the

name our Lord inherited from the Christs of past history. And hence too we understand how S. Paul would be quite intelligible to a Jew when he spoke of being 'in Christ' or 'in the Christ.' For the Jewish doctrine was that the Christ had always represented, even included the people, and that it would still be so when the perfect, divine Christ came. Look at Daniel vii., and this will be clear. He who in vii. 13 f. is presented (like 'a son of man' or as 'the son of man') to the Most High and receives the kingdom, is in vii. 27 the whole company of the saints.

S. Paul then brought this idea of the representative, inclusive Christ with him when he entered the Christian church. He found there Jewish Christians to whom also it was familiar. He gathered converts from the Asiatic Greeks who perhaps had a kindred idea of 'mystical' union in the god of their mysteries. The passionate faith of gratitude and love which was awakened by his vision at Damascus revealed to him intenser truth in these ideas. Meditation on the Lord's death, experience of life and power and peace imparted by the risen living Christ revealed still more. The doctrine of the messianic Spirit (also inherited from Judaism) brought more and more purity and clearness to his thought. More and more the formal conception of representation, and the material metaphor of enfolding, were dispensed with: more and more all became direct, lucid, real as it became spiritual. 'The Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,' he writes in 2 Cor. iii. 17. The precise interpretation of these bold words is difficult, but the general sense is not doubtful. They explain what he says in v. 16, 'Henceforth we know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more.' This does not mean 'I take no interest in the gospel history': it does mean that S. Paul was what we now call a 'mystic' (for we have altered the signification of 'mystic,' 'mystical,' etc., from what that set of words

bore in Paul's day and in our Prayer Book): he was 'mystical' rather than 'sacramental,' and realised union directly through the Spirit without mediation of even sign and symbol. Only we should ever observe the sanity of his mysticism. The Spirit was life, practice, conduct to him. To walk by the Spirit, to bear the fruit of the Spirit, was the only way he recognised of being spiritual. Spiritual and moral can hardly be distinguished in his teaching.

And in Ephesians, where this doctrine of the spiritual Christ reaches its greatest depth and clearness, it is also most practical. It dominates a doctrine of the church, which issues in its turn into a larger revelation of the deity of Christ.

In S. Stephen's speech and throughout the opening scene of Acts in Jerusalem the word 'church' stands for the Jewish church, ancient, one, large, the holy church of the fathers.¹ In Paul's epistles of the missionary period it designates the assembly (cf. Philemon 2) or church of the faithful in a particular place, and it is found in the plural of these many several 'churches.' Paul, and no doubt the other apostles, took pains to preserve the one faith in these many churches. The strife between Jewish and Gentile Christians made the task hard, and in discipline some variety was found necessary. 'The care of all the churches' was an anxiety. Paul bore the toil, anxiety, and opposition gallantly, patiently. By degrees the strain of Jew against Gentile was lessened. In Ephesians, perhaps anticipating somewhat in the joy and courage of his faith, he writes as though all cleavage were annulled: the mystery is at last revealed: Jew and Gentile are one. Yet not by losing their distinctive qualities: unity of spirit includes variety of function: all are one as a complex growing body is one. After the toil and anxiety of the missionary years, in

¹ In v. 11 the word (*ecclesia*) signifies the 'assembly' in no technical sense. In ii. 47 the word, in its technical sense, betrays the later text: compare A.V. with R.V.

the leisure of the captivity, with the encouragement of new success (such as is witnessed to in the opening chapters of Philippians) that happened to S. Paul which, in more trivial measure happens to any one who labours and broods and then waits in stillness. The idea descends which brings order into scattered effort. It was the old idea of Judaism, the idea of the one church, but it was the old idea reformed, perfected.

It is ancient for it is the ancient Jewish church in new growth. But it gathers Gentile and Jew together and continues God's purpose which had been working hiddenly among the Gentiles also.

It is one: but by expansion not by conquest, as for the most part the Old Testament had shaped its hope. Barriers now are taken away and those who had been far off enter freely. All are fellow citizens in divine isonomy.

It is holy. The traditional term 'holy,' 'saintly,' belongs to all its members: perhaps that is what is emphasised in the unusual phrase 'the holy apostles and prophets' (iii. 5); the old order and the new are thus sanctified together. But this holiness is more practical, thorough and hopeful than ever before. The church is a church in the world, organised for service, in order to bring all the world into its holiness.

And it is living. There is no need for exaggerating the rigidity of contemporary Judaism. Doubtless there was much earnestness and vigour left. But the crucifixion, the temper of Paul's Judaising opponents, the temper in which Judaism survived the fall of Jerusalem and the ruined hopes of Barcochba, are sufficient to indicate how little Judaism had of life compared with apostolic Christianity. To Judaism all things certainly did not become new, and that new birth is evident throughout the New Testament. This life is natural but divine; natural in its homeliness and simplicity; divine in its dependence upon, its sublime confidence in eternal powers. This is the true

'supernatural'; what the apostolic Christians tersely summed up in 'the Spirit.'

It is this life, so manifold in unity, so determined in its growth, so capable of assimilating and transforming human elements, of drawing more and more from its spiritual source; it is this life which S. Paul has chiefly in view when he describes the church as a 'body,' the 'body of Christ.'

We, in using this metaphor of the 'body,' are apt to think of the natural body with its limiting line of boundary. S. Paul is with us here in one respect. He too means to indicate the visible society of the faithful manifesting Christ in the world, and when he speaks of one Lord and one faith he also speaks of one baptism, which was a visible sign of entrance. The church was to him a practical institution. But he differs from our tendency to harden the visible and the limiting line. He means spiritual not natural body. And 'body' implies for him chiefly growth. For him the term is hardly metaphorical. If the spiritual body with which each man is clothing himself during his Christian life is a reality, so is the spiritual body of the risen Christ. This spiritual body of Christ is the church, and Christ is still clothing himself therewith. In the last verse of Eph. i. the rendering of the Revised Version cannot be justified. The Greek participle must be a passive (as the Latin Vulgate takes it). The meaning is that the church, the body of Christ, is 'the fulness of him who all in all is being fulfilled.'

So Dr. Armitage Robinson translates it in his Commentary and exposition of Ephesians,¹ in which he may almost be said to have recovered a forgotten article of the apostolic faith. This is the doctrine of

¹ *S. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, a revised text and translation with exposition and notes* (Macmillan, 1903). The *Exposition*, in which the doctrine referred to above is fully brought out, has since been published separately. Westcott in his commentary (Macmillan, 1906) agrees about the translation and sets forth the same doctrine. But Westcott shews less plainly its peculiar importance and consequences.

the inclusive Christ. The Lord Jesus died and rose from the dead. He rose with all his manhood, in his human but spiritual body. By the resurrection, according to the Spirit of holiness, he was determined or 'defined' to be the Son of God with power (Rom. i. 4). And now the power of his Godhead is manifest, not in separation from men, but in enabling him to overcome the limitations of our manhood in its present imperfection, and to draw us into himself and make us really parts of his spiritual body. 'Christ' is not just the same as, or just a title of Jesus. 'Christ' is 'the Christ,' and is the Lord Jesus together with his faithful. And as the number of the faithful increases, and as they more and more grow in holiness into the likeness of their Lord, the head of this body, so the Christ grows, is all in all being fulfilled. Christ is divine, not because he is unapproachable, inimitable, but because he really can do this, because of his transcendent faculty of inclusion. This doctrine had been almost forgotten. Therefore much of the New Testament had been misunderstood. In face of the 'claims' of the Christ in S. John's Gospel reason had been separated from the faith. The ideal morality of the New Testament, that the saints, the faithful, do not sin, had been put far off as unattainable. Progress in truth and conduct had been doubted for mankind as a whole, as though the true faith compelled us to suppose that from first to last only a little flock must oppose a hostile world; human nature remaining on the whole ever the same. And we called ourselves 'christians,' and Christ 'the founder of our religion,' instead of believing ourselves to be 'in Christ,' and recognising Christ as having been in the world from the beginning, always the author of all goodness and truth, and as still working in the world until the end, still growing, being all in all fulfilled. This is part of the meaning of the verse in the *Quicumque vult*: 'One Christ, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood

into God.' And this was in Tennyson's mind when he sang ('In Memoriam,' cv.) of 'the Christ that is to be.' Apostolic truths are after all never forgotten everywhere at any time.

Thus to S. Paul in his captivity a sublime idea of the one church came down from God. It reconciled what had seemed opposites, it corrected first views, as of the immediate coming of Christ. It was in harmony with his progressive discernment of the Spirit as the great reality. It led him into a profounder understanding of the person of Jesus Christ, of his essential union with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead, and at the same time (the one revelation throwing light upon the other) of the destiny in God's purpose for men: they too were to be lifted with Christ into God: the rhetoric of 1 Cor. xv., 'that God may be all in all,' could be worked out into clear thought.

And just as in 1 Cor. xv. he passes beyond the 'coming' to the 'end,' when the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom, and (as he seems to meditate) even such terms as we now use with most awful reverence to express in human manner the judgements and the nature of God, shall be superseded; so here he passes from the idea of the church, the practical, social instrument of the inclusive Christ, to even larger and more eternal conceptions of this gathering of all into unity. In spite of the inconveniences of the term, the limitations of metaphor and analogy which beset it, we are finding to-day that eternal truth can best be sought through personality. Where we say 'personality' or 'character' S. Paul used to say 'man'—the 'old man,' the 'new man,' and so on. And in Ephesians his ultimate convictions of unity in Christ are expressed in this manner. Christ Jesus, our peace, made Jew and Gentile one, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, 'that he might create in himself one new man' (ii. 14 f.). And in chapter iv., after speaking of the one body and the one Spirit, etc.; then of the various

offices and functions in the one practical church; he goes on to show how all this is intended 'for the building up of the body of Christ . . . till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

Dr. Armitage Robinson once gathered up the theology of S. Paul along three lines:¹ *One for all; All in one; All one man.* The phrases are derived from 2 Cor. v. 14, Gal. iii. 28, Eph. ii. 15. *One for all, All in one* come from epistles of the missionary period, and express the gospel liberty for which S. Paul was then striving. That was the period of 'fightings without, and fears within' (2 Cor. vii. 5), of gospel 'ambition' (Rom. xv. 20, 2 Cor. v. 9, 1 Thess. iv. 11, R.V. margin). He preached of Jew and Gentile, law and grace, advent and redemption, Christ dying for all, Christ receiving from all and opening the way to all that they may find their home in him. *All one man* expresses the joy (Phil. ii. 2, 18, iii. 1, iv. 4) and peaceful confidence (Phil. iv. 7, 9) of the victorious vision which was opened in Rome, the large outlook upon 'The Christ that is to be.' There the controversy of Jew and Gentile draws to a close; larger thoughts flow in of the person of Christ, the purpose of God, the unity of all Godhead and all Manhood. 'Ambition' passes into fulfilment (Eph. i. 23), the struggle of the 'churches' into the ordered, manifold, and onward sweeping life of the one church (Eph. iii. 10).²

So we may sum up the life of S. Paul; or all but sum it up. The close of 2 Timothy really appears to coincide with sound tradition, not to be the source of spurious tradition, that he was released from the first

¹ *Central teachings of the New Testament in Thoughts for Teachers of the Bible* (Longmans, 1914).

² This paragraph is taken from the second of three lectures on *The teaching of S. Paul*, published in *The Educational Times*, March, April, May, 1915.

captivity, again served Christ and the Gospel in a free field, and at last died at Rome by the persecuting hand of Nero; Lightfoot thinks A.D. 67, Mr. C. H. Turner A.D. 64-65. That agrees with the silence of Acts and the confidence of Philippians. The last farewell to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts xx. 25, 38) may be harmonised with a sense of the fitness of the apostle's being cut off in the heyday of his labour, his eye not dimmed and his strength not abated.¹ But that is romantic not scientific imagination. We have already looked as far as we need for the purpose of such a sketch as this, into the problem of the Pastoral epistles. These are not forgeries. They are much edited fragments of S. Paul. They do shew how church order had developed even in the lifetime of S. Paul. They shew how new disorders threatened, how the Gnosticism just vaguely stirring when Colossians was written, took harder outline not long after. And they shew how Paul could work out the practical precepts of his early letters in a more systematic way when the need arose. And they shew him to the last as a very gallant gentleman, the lover of his friends and the undaunted servant of his Lord, still serenely satisfied with the peace he had found in the gospel.

But the filling up of these fragments shews something else. It shews, what our present use of S. Paul's writing still shews: how hardly others rise to his height. In Ephesians the church is pictured as a building, a process of building (*oikodomé*, ii. 21; cf. *patria*, iii. 15, which means 'fatherhood' not 'family,' the living type not the fixed example of an institution). In 1 Tim. iii. 15 this 'building' has become a 'house.' That is one example of the kind of change which may be noticed again and again in the Pastorals. There are besides so many instances of a quite different theological vocabulary from S. Paul's—'our Saviour God,' 'the blessed or happy (*makarios*) and only

potentate,' etc.—and that signifies much: novelties in mere vocabulary would signify little, but theological vocabulary has another kind of importance. Let a man study the New Testament throughout, spending thought as well as time upon it: let him bring to bear upon it the fresh light of modern historical discovery and of comparative religion: let him clear his mind of old-fashioned critical prejudice. Then let him read the fourteen Pauline epistles through again and see for himself whether he does not at once separate Hebrews from the rest as not Paul's: whether he does not then decide that there is no real difficulty in accepting all the epistles of the missionary and captivity periods: but finally, whether the feeling does not grow upon him that the Pastorals represent Paul largely re-fashioned by a different order of mind.

It is the disciplinarian mind hardening the mystical. It is the freedom of the creative passing into the logic of an institutional period. We may not say it is the average limiting the inspired, for the Pastorals are still fresh and wonderful; the large decisive utterance of the apostolic church is there still, a salutary refreshment for our modern consciences. But in these epistles the voice of the apostle is heard but here and there through the more prosaic wisdom of the general church.

And yet that wisdom is precious. It witnesses to what S. Paul himself valued, to the variety in unity which he preached in Ephesians and recognised as corresponding to 'the very varied wisdom' (iii. 10) of God. He would have been the last to confine the church within Paulinism. In the next chapter we shall see certain other impulses at work, other lines of tradition coming into the web of history. The Pastorals, whatever the date of their compilation, indicate the existence of this variety all along.

III

A.D. 70 : FAITH ON TRIAL FINDS ITS VINDICATION IN RETROSPECT : GLORY IN HUMILIATION

SOME hold that Acts was written to put Christianity in a favourable light before the eyes of Roman authorities; that it was the earliest 'apology.' It seems more obviously to put the rule of Rome in a favourable light to the Christians, and the most natural way to read it is to suppose the story a true representation of things as they were during the missionary labours of S. Paul. In his epistles too Rome seems to be the just protective power which makes his hard task easier. But with S. Paul's death conditions changed. The Pastorals made us face the question whether S. Paul was released from his first imprisonment. The trend of criticism has been of late to suppose that he was. Mr. C. H. Turner in his article in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* on the chronology of the New Testament arrives at the carefully calculated dates 59-61 for the captivity, then rather more than two years further work, then martyrdom about A.D. 64. In that year the fire at Rome caused Nero to find scapegoats in the Christians. That both S. Paul and S. Peter were martyred at Rome and both under Nero has been in effect the constant tradition of the Church. The evidence marshalled by Mr. Turner confirms the tradition, and it is reasonable to conclude that both apostles were put to death soon after the fire of A.D. 64.

But the trials of the Christians on that occasion had an important consequence. The crucial question of the illegality of Christianity was then settled. The

violence of this first outbreak of persecution was not for some time repeated. Nevertheless the era of persecution had begun. Under Domitian (81-96) persecution was severe. The relations between the church and the empire were by then quite different from what they appear in Acts. The Apocalypse pictures them luridly. There is a deadly contest between the church, loyal to the worship of the one God and to Jesus Christ her Lord, and the Roman empire with its Caesar-worship; and twenty years later Pliny writes from Bithynia, where he is governor, to his emperor Trajan for instructions about obstinate Christians. He writes with the kindly moderation of a good Roman, but there is no mistaking the position: if they will not worship the emperor they must die.

And besides direct persecution the church felt the storm which disturbed the whole world in the years between Nero (A.D. 54-68) and Vespasian's accession (A.D. 69). Tacitus begins his *Histories* of these times thus:

‘I start upon a narrative teeming with disasters, terrible with wars, discordant with seditions, violent even in the intervals of peace. Three civil wars, more abroad . . . the Parthians nearly taking up arms because they were illuded by the appearance of a pretender Nero . . . the sea was full of exiles, barren rocks defiled with murders . . . no worse disasters to the Roman people, no more unmistakeable evidence ever proved that our imperial continuance is not the care of heaven,—retribution for our sins is.’

Well might Dr. Sanday write, veering from the later to the earlier of the disputed dates for the Apocalypse, ‘The old impression, of which I have never been able entirely to rid myself, resumes its force. Can we not conceive the Apocalypse rising out of the whirling chaos of the years A.D. 68-69, when the solid fabric of the empire may well have seemed to be really breaking up, more easily than at any other period? And would

not the supposition that it did so rise simplify the whole historical situation of the last five and thirty years of the first century as nothing else could simplify it?¹

For the Roman empire these years meant civil war and the rise and fall of three adventurer emperors, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. For Jews and Christians they meant even more. In A.D. 66 that revolt, which we hear muttering in the Galilean Gospel, broke out. In A.D. 70 it ended with the sack of Jerusalem by Titus. The absolute annihilation of the old Judaism did not come till the insurrection of Barcochba was suppressed in A.D. 135. But the fall of Jerusalem marks the great change. The ordered worship, the church instinct, which S. Luke has enshrined in the opening chapters of his Gospel, passed away then. The continuance of young Christianity in the fellowship of temple devotions which he pictures in the first section of Acts could never be again: neither that nor anything like it, for not only Christian church and temple but Christian church and synagogue were henceforth sundered, and even the controversy between Jew and Gentile within the body of Christ was superseded in a tragic reconciliation or oblivion. We may therefore take A.D. 70 as the central date round which to gather the three books of this period of trial, 1 Peter, Hebrews, and the Apocalypse. It is not easy to place them precisely, but we may hazard as a working hypothesis that 1 Peter was written between 61 and 64 before the Neronian persecution; Hebrews between 66 and 68 when the Jewish war was beginning; the Apocalypse, though probably written under Domitian, repeats earlier apocalyptic encouragements for times of trial and is coloured by recollections of the fall of Jerusalem, perhaps of the persecution of Nero.

The word 'trial' or 'temptation' has an intense

¹ Preface to *The Apocalypse of St. John I.-III., with introduction, commentary, and additional notes by the late F. J. A. Hort* (Macmillan, 1908).

meaning in the New Testament. When all allowance has been made for the exaggeration of a fresh idea, it remains evident that our Lord's 'gospel' or 'good news,' was the speedy coming of the kingdom of God, and that the 'hope' of the early church was for the advent of the Lord as Christ in glory. The primitive gospel completed the Jewish apocalypses. One feature of those apocalypses was the expectation of a trial, temptation, or agony which must precede the blessed era of the kingdom. Through hardships, through sifting trial the elect must enter into the kingdom. That persisted as part of the Christian apocalyptic faith. Our Lord spoke of the wars and terrors which would be the 'travail pangs' of the kingdom (Matt. xxiv. 8; Mark xiii. 8); S. Paul said that we must enter the kingdom through much tribulation (Acts xiv. 22). Our Lord shewed from the Scriptures how the Christ himself must suffer that he might enter into glory (Luke xxiv. 26), and we may partly imagine how that conviction inspired him to resolve to die and give his life a ransom for many. In the prayer he taught his disciples he bade them say Thy kingdom come. He also, quite in the spirit of his last apocalyptic prophecy, bade them say Lead us not into temptation. For he did not mean by that petition, Keep us from occasions of ill-temper, self-indulgence, and the other sins to which the flesh is prone, any more than by 'daily bread' he meant a moderate income. He thought of the fiery trial or temptation that must precede the kingdom, and taught how right it was to ask to be spared its rigour so far as the Father in his loving wisdom willed it. Now, in the period we are entering upon, this trial, this 'fiery temptation' (1 Pet. iv. 12) approaches. Like all fulfilments of prophecy, it comes in somewhat other form than was expected. And these three books provide encouragement by revealing that the 'trial' and the 'advent' are not to be separated, first the trial then the advent; but in the trial Christ himself comes to help his servants.

He will, as S. Paul had already promised, make with 'the temptation' the way of escape (1 Cor. x. 13). The faithful have been guarded hitherto for the salvation which will be punctually revealed 'in a season of extremity,' as Dr. Hort would translate 1 Pet. i. 5: when things are at the worst, then Christ comes.

And so we shall find in these books a developing faith in the advent. Now Christians begin to understand anew their Lord's command, 'Take no thought for the morrow: the morrow will take thought for itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' 'While it is called, To-day' is the refrain in Hebrews. Of the final advent none knows how to speak as he ought to speak—no not even the angels or the Son. But Christ's advent is, or begins, even now, when in the time of trial he calls as captain of salvation, loyal soldiers to follow him; and when, as the redeemer who has himself endured the trial, he succours his hard-tried servants.

1 Peter begins with greeting from 'Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ.' It was known to the church from very early years; indeed it is probably referred to in 2 Peter (iii. 1), and there seem to be reminiscences of it in Clement of Rome's epistle to the Corinthians. No doubt was felt about its authorship till modern times, and now that the later epistles of S. Paul are generally allowed to be his own, and his release from imprisonment in A.D. 61 is so generally considered probable, these modern difficulties are nearly cleared away. It does indeed seem unlikely that a Galilean fisherman (a ship-master, not a peasant) should have written such good Greek; for 1 Peter stands with James and Acts on the more literary side of New Testament Greek. But that may be due to Silvanus through whom S. Peter says he wrote (v. 12). On the whole we may be content, while remembering that some good scholars and good churchmen still have scruples, to follow Dr. Chase, the Bishop of Ely, in his fine articles in Hastings'

Dictionary,¹ and thus envisage the situation. The epistle was written shortly after S. Paul's trial had ended in acquittal. He had summoned S. Peter to join him at Rome, and with Peter Silvanus. After Paul's release Silvanus consented to become his delegate (as he had been before) and on his behalf to journey in Asia Minor; there he would explain the situation in Rome and enforce the doctrine then uppermost in Paul's mind. This mission was aided by Silvanus carrying a letter from S. Peter, now a fellow worker with S. Paul at Rome; Silvanus himself being the friend of both apostles and now executing Paul's commission. This view of the circumstances accounts for the Pauline colour which is conspicuous in the phraseology and not altogether absent from the thought; and it fits in with that divergence of temper between the apostles which Galatians proves to have existed for a while, but which earlier critics exaggerated till it spoilt all proportion in their construction of the history.

S. Peter opens his letter by a greeting of grace and peace from himself as apostle of Jesus Christ to the sojourners of the dispersion in Asia Minor. The address and the terms of greeting are taken from the Old Testament. This is S. Peter's manner throughout the letter; he keeps the style of his ancestral Jewish churchmanship and treats his Gentile brothers as inheritors of old renown.

Then he proceeds: Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who long ago provided salvation to be revealed in time of need: this salvation is the revelation of the presence of Jesus Christ which the Spirit of Christhood in the ancient prophets foreshowed.

Wherefore gird up your loins through Jesus Christ: in holiness make perfect your trust in God. The time

¹ 'Peter (Simon),' 'Peter (first epistle),' 'Peter (second epistle)': Dr. Bigg's very original edition in Clark's *International Critical Commentaries* has already been mentioned (cf. p. 60). The Commentary on chapters i. 1-ii. 17 by Dr. Hort, published after his death by Macmillan in 1898, is invaluable for its philosophic breadth and depth as well as for its penetrating scholarship.

of trial is the proving of that royal priesthood which you inherit from the chosen people of God.

Here ends the introductory part of the letter. Before leaving it, notice the references to the Blood of Jesus Christ in i. 2 and 19. The second of these is general, and might have been made by S. Paul. The first is rather different: it is not to the shedding but to the sprinkling of blood, that is to the sacrificial transaction with the blood of the victim: it is an approach to the idea of Leviticus, Hebrews, and S. John.

The second part of the epistle begins at ii. 11. The threatening trial takes larger shape in the encouraging sympathetic clauses. Be subject to authority, says the apostle: authority may seem but human, yet it is divine in origin. Subjects to magistrates, slaves to masters, wives and husbands, let due respect and something more than mere respect be paid in all these relationships. This may involve suffering—for slaves especially. But think of the suffering of Christ, the loving martyr whom Isaiah's Servant of the LORD pre-figured; and in his love do ye too create good.

He, suffering in the flesh, carried wide salvation through the world of Spirit. Do ye likewise, and change the world as ye (once heathen) have been changed.

The end of all this present order is nigh. Intensify sin-covering love: so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ to whom is glory and dominion for all ages in their complex succession. So be it; that is our answer to God's onward working will.

Then in the third and last division (iv. 12 to end) he speaks plainly. Fiery trial indeed draws near for those whom men scornfully designate 'Christians.' Meet the trial with goodness worthy of the name and commit your lives, your natural and your inner Christian lives, to God who made you what you are.

Elders (your brother elder says it), be shepherds like the Good Shepherd. Younger men, be loyal and

obedient. All gird on the lowliness of the Master, the lowliness to which God is so gracious.

Be lowly in God's protecting hand; and may God who tries you now establish you for ever.

Silvanus who has written this letter for me carries it to you: you know him as Paul's friend and our trusty brother. Receive it as a letter of good cheer from the Babylon of our time, where I am now with Mark who is indeed a son to me. Greetings all round and peace.

It was indeed a letter of good cheer; all the more because of its marked simplicity. S. Paul with his passionate consciousness of union in the exalted Christ had swept the faith onward: henceforth the doctrine of Christ's person must always be deep and full. But the glance we gave to the Pastorals showed, what the experience of all periods confirms, that the average churchman does not enter perfectly into the mind of S. Paul. He is too mystical, too intellectually mystical, for most people to make quite their own. So today 'The Imitation of Christ' is the food of a hundred souls to one that really cares for S. Augustine's Confessions. And in this early age, when trial and persecution pressed sensibly upon the church, the common sense, so to speak, of the rank and file asserted itself to meet the call. Once more we see the simplicity of Galilean discipleship, the following of Christ's example, loyalty to the Lord Jesus. In this epistle of S. Peter there is retrospect, recollection: it is the letter of one whose daily teaching might well become the pattern of a written Gospel, and in 'Mark my son' of v. 13 we seem to catch the earliest promise of the first narrative of the Gospel days. Yet, so far, this is unobtrusive. Only when we read the letter through from beginning to end do we feel its undertone of remembering affection and loyalty. It is a preparation for Hebrews with the repeated emphasis upon the human name 'Jesus' and the repeated 'days of his flesh,' and for the problem which this new reminiscent method of

devotion soon set, the problem of Christ's person in the light of realism, the humiliation which obscured the glory; the problem already suggested by S. Paul with 'the scandal of the cross,' and so keenly appreciated in these days of ours when Gospel criticism has been recovering the manhood of the Christ and confronting the limitations involved in manhood. Thus, as we shall see, the simplicity of 'imitation' could not stand still, any more than the simplicity of opening discipleship could. Theology follows practice, and this new stage of the church's course issues in deepening and elucidating the reasonable faith.

The epistle to the Hebrews is merely entitled 'To the Hebrews' in the most ancient manuscripts. No author gives his name in it, nor is there any opening greeting with address. No names at all are mentioned till Timothy is referred to at the end, and greetings are sent either from the writer and his companions in Italy, or from his companions who have come from Italy and are with him in some other place. Clement of Rome, who alludes to other epistles of the New Testament, makes long and almost exact quotations from Hebrews in his letter written about A.D. 96 to the Corinthians. He does not name the epistle or say anything about its author. This is especially significant because the persistent tradition of the Roman church was that S. Paul did not write this epistle. Jerome and Augustine in the fourth century begin to speak of it loosely as S. Paul's, but they know the custom of their church is against this, and the western church preserved the tradition all along, though little attention was paid to it in the middle ages. Tertullian in or before the third century quotes the epistle as Barnabas'. Only at Alexandria in early times do we find it assigned to S. Paul, and we only know this of Alexandria from the criticism which the scholars of Alexandria applied to the popular opinion. Clement of Alexandria, like his master (probably Pantaenus in the second century)

said that the Greek style forbade one to suppose Paul to have written the epistle : it might be connected with him but actually written by some disciple of his, Luke perhaps or Clement of Rome. Origen allowed the possible connexion, declaring absolutely that no one who knew Greek could think that S. Paul wrote it. Who really wrote it, he said, God only knows.¹ But since its doctrine was truly apostolic, and might well be derived in some manner from S. Paul, there was no harm, he held, in a church continuing the custom, if it was its custom, of calling the epistle 'Paul's.' The scholar's subtlety was presently forgotten, his indulgence was accepted, and the uncritical habit spread, till in east and west Hebrews was commonly included in the collection of Pauline epistles. Yet in the west careful writers still recorded the genuine tradition of their church.

It seems clear that there is no reason for regarding S. Paul as the author of the epistle. Tertullian's ascription to Barnabas would be an obvious conjecture ; Barnabas the Levite might write this epistle of priesthood. Clement and Luke, as redactors of Paul's ideas, is the expedient of a more literary judgement. But we can only say with Origen that no man knows who wrote it. There is connexion with S. Paul. There seems to be direct reminiscence of some of his epistles, especially of the Roman epistles of the captivity, and certainly the theology of Hebrews would hardly have developed if S. Paul had not taught his theology before it. But the differences from S. Paul's mind are more conspicuous: the stress upon the days of our Lord's flesh, the sense in which that word 'flesh' is used, the following rather than mystical union with Christ, and the broad sacrificial analogy which runs through the whole. This last may have been in part suggested by a few scattered metaphors in Paul, *e.g.* Rom. xii. 1; but it is worked out in no Pauline manner, the profound doctrine of the sacrificial blood

¹ See for all this, Eusebius, *Ecll. Hist.* vi. 14 and 25.

is Hebrews' own, and this also proves Clement of Rome impossible as author.

It is true that the contrast between Paul and Hebrews runs parallel with a contrast in circumstance and purpose, but that would not bring the epistle into Paul's realm of thought. For the understanding of Hebrews however, circumstance and purpose are of much importance. And first, it seems to be a letter to a small group of intimate friends, men like the author who have had rather an elaborate Alexandrine education; who appreciate his good, almost classic Greek; his philosophic terminology; his subtlety in argument and in the interpretation of the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament. We can hardly imagine this very literary epistle being read to the mixed multitude of a 'church,' or (though some have imagined this) being a sermon delivered to a congregation. And it is not a sermon, but a real letter. Look at the playful remonstrance in x. 25 with 'some friends of mine who have given up going to church service with the vulgar'; or in xiii. 22, 'Bear with this long treatise, for you see I am closing with the affectionate intimacies of an ordinary letter.' When we are on the look out for them the epistle is full of such touches. Secondly, in spite of the contradiction of a few critics, the Judaic background seems unmistakable. The first readers were Christians who had been brought up in the Jewish church, as probably the writer had been also. Not indeed in the Hebrew-speaking rabbinic church of Jerusalem: if 'To the Hebrews' is quite an ancient title, 'Hebrews' is used in a wider sense than it generally bore, unless indeed we have here another instance of the author's own pious humour—'You whom I will still call Hebrews indeed.' This unhebraic Judaism is a reason against supposing the letter to have been sent to Jerusalem, and it may be noticed that the argument has nothing to do with the temple at Jerusalem but turns wholly upon the tabernacle in the Pentateuch. The letter is bookish all

through, and there is no necessity to suppose that either writer or readers had ever seen the temple: the contemporary Judaism it deals with is the Judaism of the synagogue.

Writer then and readers appear to have been converts from Hellenistic Judaism to Christianity. But there is this difference between them. The writer rests firmly in the peace of the faith: the readers have never yet made the whole truth about the Lord Jesus Christ their own. They accept him as the Christ, but know not all which that title implies. He was a teacher, and no doubt more than a mere teacher: but the divine redeemer, the supreme and only Lord, the living ruler of the universe, such essence of his mystery they have cared too little for. And consequently their faith is insecure. They are anxious and perplexed. A time of sharp trial has come upon them. Fear of persecution and still more anxiety for their honour are urging them to abandon their new allegiance. Theological controversy, they seem to say (v. 11 ff.), and the quarrel of the churches is no use to us. We entered Christianity as a reformed Judaism, and now the ancient Jewish church of our fathers needs our loyalty again. We will rally round the old simple faith in which our fathers served God well, and surely so may we.

Their friend writes to warn them that this may not be. Honour is on the other side. You have given allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, he iterates, and nothing can weigh against that. Nor would you think of such apostasy if you really understood who and what he is. You have in fact a hard duty before you. In face of all threats and all attractions you have to make up your mind to stand firm for the Lord Jesus Christ. This is hard and you shrink from it. But our Lord, if only you knew him aright, will supply the strength you need. Come now and let me show you the truth. Think of him as a priest and I believe I can make you understand. Only, exposition and argument will not

carry you all the way. Argument will be clinched by practical venture of faith. Think of him as I will try to make you think: resolve to act as he calls you in this troubled time to act: then you will find him to be the Saviour that he truly is.

What was that troubled time? Of late critics have been inclined to answer, the persecution under Domitian. The older answer had been, the outbreak of the Jewish war. That older answer was often based on reasons which were mistaken, as that the letter was addressed to the Jewish church at Jerusalem. But such reasons are not really bound up with the earlier date. The letter might well be written for a group of philosophic liberals in any country who heard the appeal to throw in their lot with their countrymen and fight for the temple and the faith: their very style of life and thought, retiring academic, would make the appeal to action at last the more irresistible. We cannot be sure about it, but it seems most natural to explain the circumstances thus. And the earlier date seems to fit the position, between S. Paul and S. John, which the theology of the epistle suggests. We cannot pretend to be certain about this, nor about the place from whence and the place to which the epistle was sent. Some connexion with Italy is indicated at the end. Let our working hypothesis be as follows. A Hellenistic Jewish Christian wrote from Rome not long after S. Paul's death to a group of friends of like education to his own and who like himself had known S. Paul. The revolt from Rome was breaking out. Pressure was upon them to return to Judaism and make common cause with their nation. They felt themselves impelled by honour to do so, and their knowledge of Christ was insufficient to bind them firmly to the Christian faith. The hard duty of choice was before them, and their friend wrote to help them to the right choice.

This is a working hypothesis, probable but not certain. Nor will our understanding of the epistle be

spoiled if another date and occasion be preferred. These two points are evident and necessary: that the writer urges his friends to do a hard duty about which they still hesitate; he appeals to the will: that they have a very imperfect faith which the writer would fill up by instruction; he also presents an argument to their intellect.

Thus brain and heart, reasoning and exhortation are interwoven throughout the epistle. But it falls into two main divisions, in the first of which (i.-ix.) argument, in the second (x.-xiii.) appeal are predominant. The first part is an argument from analogy and sets forth Christ as high priest and his redeeming work as sacrifice. In the second analogy passes (as we should now express it) into psychology, and the readers are urged to lose and find their will in God's will, as Jesus Christ did, and so to make his sacrifice their own.¹

¹ This doctrine of Christ saving by making his sacrifice our own is brought out by DuBose in *High Priesthood and Sacrifice: an exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Longmans, 1908). 'Our Lord does not save from having to do it all,' writes Dr. DuBose; 'He helps and enables to do it all.' This book is the third of a tetralogy of which others are *The Gospel in the Gospels*, in which he passes onward and inward from the simple faith believed and preached in Galilee to the full enjoyment of Christ's deity and vindicates a place within Christianity for each stage; *The Gospel according to Saint Paul*; and *The Reason of Life*, which treats of the Johannine Gospel.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, the first apology for Christianity: an exegetical study (T. & T. Clark, 1899) is a notable book in which Dr. A. B. Bruce shows how these 'Hebrews' had not attained to more than an imperfect apprehension of the faith of the church and how this 'apology' set the full faith before them. Still more important is his insistence on the teaching of the epistle about our Lord's true manhood and its doctrine of 'glory in humiliation.' Dr. A. B. Davidson's little edition in T. & T. Clark's *Handbooks for Bible Classes* is especially valuable for its treatment of the theme, 'Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.' Ménégot in *La Théologie de l'épître aux Hébreux* (Paris, 1894) gives among much else that is lucid and interesting a good account of the partial interpretations which successive ages have made of this epistle's doctrine of sacrifice. Dr. Hans Windisch of Leipzig has furnished a brief commentary (Tübingen, 1913) with the various material collected by modern scholarship. But the greatest commentary is still Westcott's *The Epistle to the Hebrews, the Greek text with notes and essays* (Macmillan, 1st ed. 1889).

The epistle opens with a poet's or artist's vision. He sets us as it were in heaven and we behold glory streaming from the invisible essence of the Godhead, and illuminating those eminences in history who were entitled Christs and Sons of God; a king, a prophet, the whole chosen people of Israel: then taking definite form in one who lived on earth as man and wrought purification for men's sins, and so returned, full circle completed, to sit on the right hand of the majesty on high, having inherited and fulfilled those ancient names: now enthroned he rules all life from the centre. In the second chapter a brief parenthesis makes it unmistakable that the Lord Jesus who taught in Galilee is meant. Then it is shewn that he came to earth as no angel—the angels are the fires and winds, forces of nature as we might say and as the Old Testament and later Judaism taught—but as very man, restoring that personal line of union which runs from God to man, and doing this by sharing the limitations of real manhood, suffering and humiliated, for in his utmost humiliation his supreme glory was perfected; he was crowned or garlanded like a victor for the suffering of death.

In the third and fourth chapters the two pictures, of the eternal Son proceeding from the glory of the Godhead and the man Jesus glorified in humiliation, are made one in the contemplation of Jesus as the Christ. And then exhortation breaks the argument for a space. 'To-day' is the refrain, quoted from the Psalm. 'To-day he comes. The Christians have expected, prayed, and longed for the great final advent. That is still for the morrow of which our business is not now to take thought. In the storm and trouble of to-day he makes his advent immediate and real. Be ready and be loyal. Follow the captain wheresoever he calls you to follow. He is our high priest who has entered heaven before us. Now we must follow and enter with him into the peace that trustful obedience assures.

In chapter v. the analogy from priesthood begins.

This has been prepared for by a few phrases let drop in chapter i. and chapter iv. concluded with a touching picture of Jesus as exalted to the heavens, where his sympathy enables us to follow him and find grace and mercy from the throne of grace; and this picture was inscribed 'High Priest.'

At once two characteristics of priesthood are indicated. The priest is taken from among men, he must be really and truly man; and he is appointed with regard to the things towards God, or as the same phrase used of Moses in his relationship to Aaron (Ex. iv. 16) instructs us to translate, he is appointed 'on the Godward side.'¹

Here are two ideas which dominate the epistle. Almost at once follows the phrase (which will be repeated) 'in the days of his flesh.' Then comes a description of our Lord's agony of prayer issuing in the bold assertion that though he was Son 'he learned obedience.' Add to this the continual insistence on the name of his manhood 'Jesus.' Then remember that if A.D. 66 be the date of the epistle it was written just about the time when the earliest gospel, Mark, appeared. Do we not perceive how in this time of trial men's hearts were drawn to the earthly life of their Lord who suffered and was brave, who can sympathise, and who calls his faithful to follow in his train? So in after times, in England for instance at the end of the civil war of the fifteenth century, a weary generation has turned to devotion to the Sacred Name. But so also, as in our own critical enthusiasm of late, this turning back to the Galilean Gospel has raised unexpected difficulty in studious minds. The actual history proves so strangely lacking in all that we commonly hold glorious. The ministry in so obscure a corner, the weakness, the problem of the Lord's restricted knowledge or of his human progress in obedience, the paradox of modern apocalyptic theory,

¹ This translation was suggested by a sermon at Cambridge preached many years ago by Canon J. H. Whitaker.

the ancient scandal of the cross; this daunts us. For all this perplexity our author seeks a solution. He was aided by temperament and education. We have already noticed slightly his picturesque way of writing. There is more than style in this. It is a symptom of his habit of seeing eternal things through the visible. S. Paul in Rom. i. 20 (cf. 2 Cor. iv. 18) just touches on this habit or principle. But it was not Paul's characteristic habit. 'After the Spirit' always and as immediately as possible, was his predilection. Always through the temporal and visible, was the rule of the writer to the Hebrews. And as an Alexandrine Platonist he had been trained to make the most of the rule. 'Mystical' and 'sacramental' ought no doubt to mean exactly the same thing. But in modern speech these words distinguish two classes of mind. And, in modern speech, if S. Paul is a philosophic mystic, this author is a sacramental artist. Hence he does not shrink from representing frankly the real manhood of his Lord; the real, with all its limitation and humiliation. Only through accepting that wholly shall we reach the true Godhead.

And he presses this. The humiliation is more than an accident of manhood. In suffering, in humiliation, the great opportunity of manhood has always been supplied. This writer finds our Lord's supreme glory not after his shameful death, as S. Paul had shewn it in Phil. ii. 5 ff., but in the moment of utmost weakness and humiliation. He was crowned or wreathed for the suffering of death, not after it (ii. 9). The subsequent exaltation is always signified in this epistle by enthronement, as regularly with ancient kings: 'he sat down at the right hand of God.' So presently we shall find S. John recognising the moment of glory in the moment when Judas went out into the night and the last hope of any other way but the way of the cross was cut off (John xiii. 31). And the whole Gospel of S. John is a perfecting of that sacramental answer to the problem of the person of Christ, which is given in a

first sketch in the epistle to the Hebrews. Henceforth there can be no Arian mistake as to our Lord's true and perfect Godhead and true and perfect manhood. He can never be imagined as an angel or heavenly being, partly God and partly man. He is wholly God because wholly man, and (though even orthodox theologians were sometimes to forget this) it must be through the real manhood that men penetrate to the Godhead within, not from a conception of absolute Godhead that they deduce his unique manhood. Only, our author does open his epistle with that poet's vision of the divine original. He affirms his agreement with the full tradition of the church. So is he free to picture his Lord in the rest of the epistle from the side of the days of his flesh, and to shew him 'becoming' our high priest.

Now consider this 'priesthood on the Godward side.' It is a view of our Lord's salvation which rests on analogy, and the analogy starts from the Levitical priesthood as described in the Pentateuch. But this supplies little more than words and forms. The Levitical priesthood and the Levitical sacrifices are not the type of the high priesthood and the sacrifice of Christ. That type is found wherever in the history of the wide world a man or a nation has stood on the Godward side of others. Of course a Levitical priest must often have done so. Read the opening verses of chapter v. and consider whether one is speaking who has known good priests in his own life. But this was not by virtue of the Levitical institution. As an institution, the epistle reiterates, it has never effected that bringing into the very presence of God which it is the purpose of priesthood to effect. It could not effect it, since the whole system of Levitical sacrifices was artificial, a kind of make-believe: the blood of goats and bulls could never take away sins, nor could any developement or completion of that artifice pass into reality. But a king, a prophet, a suffering servant of the Lord, the people of Israel with their superior

faith and their discipline of suffering, have stood on the Godward side in actual fact. Here are persons, acting by personal affection, influence, sacrifice of their real selves, and such Godward-drawing priesthood the Lord Jesus Christ could and did consummate. And when we pass into the later chapters of the epistle in which the will of Christ and his disciples is discussed, we see how still, through the perfection of his sacrifice, men may be true priests with him; the father of a family, the colonel of a regiment, the friend made strong and emptied of self by suffering, as well as the parish priest, may stand on the Godward side of those to whom they are variously related and draw them into the presence of God.

To describe this priesthood, the eternal and world-wide, the author chooses a phrase from his Greek Bible. He calls it priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. For Melchizedek was priest of the High God and yet no member of the chosen race. He appears on a scene of violence with his blessing of peace. He comes and he passes away again mysteriously, solemnly. His was a figure which had impressed the Alexandrine scholars from whom the writer of the epistle and his friends had learned. To them this label for the eternal priesthood no doubt seemed entirely apt. We can understand their feeling, though perhaps such a title as priesthood after the order of the suffering servant (Is. liii.) might come closer to our hearts. And yet who would change the antique reverence, the sense of eternity which Melchizedek stirs? 'After the likeness of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, who hath been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life: for it is witnessed,

Thou art a priest for ever,
After the order of Melchizedek.'

In chapter ix. we move onward from priest to sacrifice. That sacrifice is made 'through blood.' Here again the Levitical ordinance is the starting point. In those

sacrifices the slaying of the victim was not the important act, but the transaction with the blood which was thus made available for sprinkling on the altar, on a person, or at the mercy-seat. This is explained by some verses of Leviticus (xvii. 10 f.) which really do contain the core of a profound theology :

‘ And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that eateth any manner of blood ; I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.’

So far we have a taboo inherited from pagan antiquity. Then comes the theology of the true religion :

‘ For the life of the flesh is in the blood : and I have given it you upon the altar to make atonement for your lives : for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.’

In Hebrew, as in Greek, there is but one word for ‘ life ’ and ‘ soul,’ and the passage becomes clearer if we keep one rendering throughout. Blood is life : life ‘ atones ’ or cleanses and renews life (Babylonian parallels and Greek equivalents justify this paraphrase) : God so far from having to ‘ be propitiated,’ of his own grace provides the means for cleansing and renewing ruined life. That is the noble Levitical idea, which the artifice of brute sacrifices could never realise, and which Christ did realise and make for ever effective when he laid down his life for his friends and offered himself to the Father of all through the blood of his cross. The blood is the life. That, literally, was the primitive Semitic belief : and it deepens in Leviticus and Hebrews beyond the literal crudeness. It is life that cleanses and renews life. If we were to substitute ‘ life ’ for ‘ blood ’ wherever such expressions occur we should go far to restore the strong feeling which our

conventional repetitions, and our confusion of sacrifice with the payment of penalty, have broken down. Yet that would not be enough. In the Levitical analogy the death of the victim sets the blood free to be operated with. When we rise from the Levitical analogy to the personal reality of the New Testament and of human experience we certainly may not ignore the pain and heroism, the affection, the bitterness and the glory of dying. Let the substitution be 'life enriched by death' and we shall come very near the true idea.

We have been following the epistle almost chapter by chapter, but in bringing priesthood and sacrifice immediately together we have passed over chapter viii. in which the author quotes Jeremiah's prophecy of the new covenant. That prophecy was delivered when Jerusalem was about to fall before the Chaldeans. Temple, monarchy, all the visible pledges and sacraments of God's presence with his people were to vanish. And Jeremiah's heart-religion found in that seeming destruction of the faith its opportunity. Now when the outward falls away the eternal enters in power. The covenant of God with his people remains ever the same: 'I will be their God and they shall be my people!' But now this covenant shall be written on the heart; shall pass from shadow and symbol to reality; shall transform natural life to divine:

'And they shall not teach every man his neighbour
and every man his brother saying, Know the
Lord:

For all shall know me,

From the least to the greatest of them.

For I will be merciful to their iniquities,

And their sins will I remember no more.'

That 'new covenant' had been revived for the Christians when their Lord inaugurated it afresh at the last supper. Yet as in Jeremiah's time, so still, they waited for its effectual working. The author of

the Hebrews, with perhaps a second fall of Jerusalem imminent, sees in this new upheaval of the foundations of faith the coming of the Lord, the superseding of dead metaphor (such as foundation, cf. vi. 1) by spiritual life, the imparting of experience and influence by a triumphant person to his own faithful followers. For himself indeed, as for S. Paul and many others, that imparting had already been consummated. For the friends to whom he writes, as for many in all generations since, it had not yet been so. He urges them to seize the opportunity, and the epistle renews its inspiration for all ages because in all ages there are imperfect 'Hebrew' Christians as well as the perfect 'Pauline,' and because in all ages Christ still 'comes' in the opportunity for decisive acts of the will.

Here is the transition to the second main division of the epistle (x. to the end). Christ offered himself once for all to his Father. As 'sacrifice' that can never be repeated, any more than his incarnation or crucifixion can be repeated. Yet our author speaks of men still crucifying Christ (vi. 6), and S. Paul writes to the Galatians of Christ being formed anew with birth pangs (Gal. iv. 19). Here, as always in this analogising epistle, we must guard against pressing the language of analogy so far as to obscure the meaning which analogy is to enforce. Sacrifice is the willing offering of self to God, the losing and finding of personal will in the one will which carries onward all that is. That was what the Lord Jesus did when, obedience fully learned, he gave up his life upon the cross. And that is what Jesus Christ¹ still re-enacts

¹ For this antithesis see xiii. 20 f. But the passage must be read in the Revised Version. The Authorised Version is translated from the medieval text of the Greek Testament which often departs from the ancient purity, making a serious difference to the sense. Heb. xiii. 20 f. is an instance of one kind of corruption to which the late text is prone. The definite intention of the original occasion is generalised for universal reading. The author in xiii. 20 f. sums up the whole argument of his letter in a collect-like prayer of blessing. What the 'Lord Jesus' did in the days of his flesh he now, exalted as 'Jesus Christ,' enables his followers to do. The writer prays that God will grant

in all his faithful, one after another, generation after generation. They do not 'imitate' Christ in the details of his earthly course, so far removed and different from theirs: they devote their whole will to God as he did, and this devotion is in another sphere from imitation, it is in the sphere of free eternal Spirit (ix. 14), where time and space and the limitation of unsundered self (x. 39) effect no separation; and so he can indeed impart his very self to them, and they can make his sacrifice their own.

This is the theme of chapter x. in which for a little while the analogy is laid aside and more immediate expression of truth is sought in terms of the will. The author's predilection for picturesque, sacramental language soon brings him back to 'offering' again. But henceforth the old phrases have fuller significance, and it is this union with God in will that

those friends whom he addresses to do their hard duty as the Lord Jesus did his, and so to enter into peace. For himself and those who with him have already made the willing sacrifice no special petition is desired: let God go on working in them his good pleasure, they have nothing more to ask.

The ancient text is generally represented in the Revised Version. Sometimes it must be sought in the margin: a notable example is ix. 11. If the Greek is read it should be in Westcott and Hort's edition (Macmillan) or Souter's (Clarendon Press) or Nestle's (Bible Society), not in what used to be the ordinary editions which give the 'textus receptus.'

This received text was called 'medieval' a few lines back. 'Byzantine' would be a better name. In the west the Latin Vulgate preserved a comparatively pure New Testament for the Latin-speaking church. The corrupted Greek was read in the Orthodox Church from the fourth century onwards, was printed by Erasmus (1516), and reproduced in printed Greek Testaments till Westcott and Hort's edition (1881) drove it out of fashion. If any one wishes to learn the principles on which this criticism is established, he should read the brief clear exposition which fills a few pages at the end of Westcott and Hort's smaller edition. If he would really understand and be convinced, he should read Dr. Hort's close-reasoned *Introduction*, the companion volume to the first edition of *The New Testament in the original Greek*. For further developments of textual criticism, Kenyon's *Handbook to the textual criticism of the New Testament* (Macmillan, 2nd ed. 1912) may be studied: it is a book which plain men and scholars will alike find delightful.

he illustrates throughout his chapter on faith (xi.) with its roll of great examples; through the appeal to follow these examples even to death in chapter xii.; and in the final call in chapter xiii. to go forth to Jesus without the camp bearing his shame; and so to enter the city of God, to receive the kingdom, to know what eternal redemption really means.

The appeal and the promise belong to all ages. But they belonged with a special intensity to the first readers of this almost private letter. Its doctrine of union with Christ is not the same as S. Paul's. S. Paul assumes that all the 'saints' to whom he writes—imperfect though he lets us see that many of them are—already dwell together 'in Christ,' already 'after the Spirit' they are in heaven. The writer to the Hebrews in his picturesque but earnest way believes that we go to heaven when we pray (iv. 16; cf. the end of the 'Dearly beloved brethren' in the Book of Common Prayer), but even in the passage referred to he urges the effort, he does not think of a continuous sojourn corresponding to a 'Pray without ceasing.' And throughout the letter union in Christ and the heavenly home are held out as a hope rather than as a present possession. But this must not be pressed too far so as to prove a radical difference in thought, far less in faith, between this writer and S. Paul. Much of the difference springs from the special circumstances. The friends to whom he wrote had emphatically not yet realised union in Christ. The sabbath rest which remains for the people of God was not yet theirs. Their will was not yet lost and found in God's will. The letter was written to induce them to take the bold step, to do the hard duty, and till they did this the Pauline assurance could not be presumed upon. Perhaps S. Paul would have reasoned with them otherwise. Yet this was their friend: he knew how to treat them, and that friendly knowledge was the channel of his inspiration. The faith of the New Testament reflects the mind of Christ from many

facets, and still there are hesitating consciences and scrupulous intellects, which the epistle to the Hebrews draws with the cord of a man more gradually and irresistibly than even Paul can manage.

When such persons read the epistle they are watching men like themselves as they come gradually to the 'possession of their souls,' advancing through the helps and hindrances of imagination to the satisfying but inexpressible contact with Jesus Christ himself. Three pictures in the epistle mark the stages of the progress. The first is at the end of chapter vi. The ship has run to port from the storm. The anchor has been dropped into the mysterious deep and holds the ground. The captain, Jesus, has gone ashore, and the crew wait for his return to bring the ship to land and follow him. The next is at xii 1 ff. Here a race-course is pictured. All round it are the spirits who have run a like course in their time and now watch anxiously to see how the young athletes will bear themselves, for without their victory the promised prize of their own perfection must still be delayed. At the end of the course there is a throne whereon Jesus sits as judge of the contest. He has run this very race himself. He sits in sight of all, and on him the new runners must fix their eyes. The moment of representation is that trying moment when the athlete strips off the wrap, 'which doth so lingeringly beset him,' to start upon the trial. Then lastly in xiii. 10 ff. there is a picture of a sacrifice. But picture fades here into the stronger light of reality. Nowhere in the epistle is it more needful to free one's self from slavery to the analogy. Else we waste time over vain questions, such as What is the altar? Is the sacrifice a burnt-offering or a thank-offering? It is hardly a sacrifice at all: it is the off-scouring of a sacrifice. But it means the Lord Jesus glorious in humiliation; in sight, in touch, in loving union which surpasses all imagery; ready to take to himself his friend for whom he died, the disciple who at last has shaken himself free from all

the tangle of fear and prejudice. Now he rallies to his Lord outside the camp of shadows, and with his Lord finds peace in the will of God. That variety in the aspect of faith, noticed above, appears more than once in this epistle. It is the epistle of priesthood. It might also be styled the epistle of the manhood: also the epistle of the ascension. And in the stress which he lays on our Lord's ascension into the presence of the Father, the author overleaps all interval between the death upon the cross and that ascension. Nor is that ascension visible, nor are any earthly visible events mentioned in this connexion after the death of the Lord: to him, it would seem, resurrection and ascension were one act of God, one 'bringing again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep' (xiii. 20), and it took place in the invisible eternal sphere.

This is in accord with the author's principle of sacrament. He views the crucifixion sacramentally. What men could see, the outward visible sign, was a defeated dishonoured man dying as a criminal on a cross. The inward spiritual reality was that in the eternal heaven, corresponding to that act in time and place, the Son of God entered as our perfected high priest into the very presence of his Father. This agrees with what we find in 1 Peter iii. 19 ff., iv. 6: the medieval notion of 'the harrowing of hell,' between the time of burial and of resurrection, has been read into S. Peter's terse sentences, it is not implied by them. And this too prepares the way for our Lord's last discourse in the Gospel according to S. John where he promises that his 'going' to the Father shall itself be his 'coming' to his disciples in the new 'mansion' of the Spirit in which they are henceforth to dwell in closer communion with him. Nor when we look back at S. Paul do we find a great difference. He does indeed speak of our Lord being raised 'on the third day' (1 Cor. xv. 4), as S. John narrates the events of that third day. But S. Paul always insists that the Lord's appearance to him was of the same

kind as the appearances on the day of resurrection, and what he and S. John considered important about all that happened on that day was that it happened 'according to the Scriptures.' In Phil. ii. 9, S. Paul brings ascension and resurrection into one as closely as in Hebrews, and his invariable insistence on the spiritual character of our Lord's risen body makes it very doubtful whether he would have recognised any difficulty in harmonising the view in Hebrews with his own: indeed it would be difficult for any one who quietly thinks it out to suppose that those influxes of the eternal, after the days of the Lord's flesh were finished, could be made subservient to the rules and sequences of ordinary narration. In the Gospel according to S. Mark there is no attempt to do that; not at least in the form in which that Gospel has come down to us, for the last twelve verses are most certainly from a later pen. The only appearance of contradiction of the view in Hebrews arises from the last chapters of Matthew and Luke and the opening verses of Acts. There wondrous things are represented in the simple sensible form of narrative which childlike believers may have repeated without theological or philosophical reflection, and which is quite like the story-telling guise in which even subtle Jewish doctors have always preferred to interpret ineffable mysteries. We may surely and with all reverence admit that while the Gospel narratives of the days of the Lord's flesh are sober history, the revelations of spiritual action after the resurrection are symbolic. It may be noticed in this connexion that the writer to the Hebrews speaks of the blessed dead as 'spirits,' and does not labour to distinguish judgement immediately after death from a final judgement day. In this treatment of hidden mysteries he follows, according to his wont, Old Testament usage. He would also, we may be pretty sure, justify his vagueness by the impossibility of schematising spiritual realities which have no plain sacramental correspondencies in common life.

These however are considerations by the way. They do not affect the broad interpretation of the epistle. May we permit ourselves to take leave of it with two quotations from modern authors which revive the two emotions roused by it—devotion to the one Will, and longing for the peace which can only be by entering into that Will?

‘When we trace the course of human affairs in all their complexity, and note the trivial incidents which proved so momentous on the destiny of races or the rise of empires, we may see, as we gaze from afar, how the Will of God rides on in majesty.’¹

‘Milton has written two epic poems in which he commemorates our fallen and our restored condition. He has written “Paradise Lost” and “Paradise Regained.” But the true epic of humanity—the epic which is in a constant course of evolution from the beginning to the end of time, the epic which is daily poured forth from the heart of the whole human race, sometimes in rejoicing paeans, but oftener amid woeful lamentation, tears, and disappointed hopes—what is it but Paradise sought for?’²

We now turn to ‘John’s Apocalypse’ as it is tersely entitled in the ancient manuscripts. We are accustomed to the fuller title, ‘The Revelation of S. John the divine.’ To scholars this perhaps allows a private distinguishing between the John of the Apocalypse and the John of the Gospel and epistles, a distinction which was made in the third century by Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, and which Dr. Swete was inclined to accept when he wrote his Commentary³ and became still more inclined

¹ W. Cunningham, *The Gospel of Work*, last page (Cambridge University Press, 1902).

² J. M. Ferrier, *Lectures on Greek Philosophy*, i. p. 272 (Blackwood, 1866).

³ *The Apocalypse of St. John, the Greek text with introduction, notes and indices* (Macmillan, 1906). This beautiful finished work of a great scholar theologian and churchman is the best commentary for

to before he wrote his article on the Apocalypse for *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Studies* in 1916. Dionysius (quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* vii. 25) thought the Apocalypse so unlike the Gospel and epistles of S. John that he ascribed it to another John than the apostle, the son of Zebedee. This opinion was seized by Eusebius who disliked the extravagances of the prophecy about 'the thousand years' and other things of the same kind. He started accordingly the idea of a second John, the presbyter, in Ephesus which has had so much vogue since, and this book which is the earliest of all the Johannine writings to be definitely assigned to the apostle (by Justin Martyr, about A.D. 150) lost credit for a long while in the eastern church.

Dionysius was a Greek and it was the Greek style of the Apocalypse which convinced him that it could not come from the same pen as the Gospel. And indeed it is hard to fancy that it could. The modern scholar, turning from classical Greek to the New Testament, finds a language somewhat strange to him. But when he takes up the Apocalypse he is amazed by its barbaric rudeness. Amazed as he may be, let him read on.

English readers, whether they know Greek or not. Other books may be mentioned as follows: Hort's fragment on chs. i.-iii. (see above, p. 120): C. Anderson Scott, *Revelation in Century Bible*: F. C. Porter, *Messages of the Apocalyptic Writers* (James Clarke): W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* (Hodder & Stoughton): W. Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis* (Göttingen), and article 'Apocalypse' in *Encyclopædia Biblica*: also *The Apocalypse, an introductory study of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, being a presentment of the structure of the book and of the fundamental principles of its interpretation*, by Edward White Benson, sometime Archbishop of Canterbury (Macmillan, 1900). This last book is very unlike the regular commentaries: to a reader with any imagination it is illuminating. Bousset has done more than any other writer for the Apocalypse. He brings together all the lines of research including Gunkel's (*Schöpfung und Chaos*) setting of the Johannine Apocalypse in the long line of apocalyptic tradition which runs back to ancient Babylonia. He has himself a broad outlook upon the mind and growth of the early church, and his *Kyrios Christos*, a history of the Christian faith from the beginning of the Gospel to Irenæus (Göttingen, 1913), opens a large view of events. And he writes a strong clear German, marshalling his argument with unusual lucidity.

Presently he is awed by the sublimity achieved by the writer with this extraordinary instrument. It is often said that no book has been so much improved by translation as the Apocalypse. But to say that betrays narrow sympathy in literature. The Apocalypse in its original Greek is overwhelming. It is painted with a full brush of deep colour. The touch is rough but never coarse. It spreads great vistas, as in the last chapter where the street of the heavenly city opens in a vast expanse to the horizon; the river pours along its gorge in the midst and the forest of the tree of life clothes the mountainous sides of the channel with its mysterious foliage. The picture has a long pedigree. Ezekiel had made his version of the scene: so had the poet of Psalm xli. with his flood of judgement which to the city of God becomes a river of healing to make gladness. Here is one of the elements in this complex composition. The apocalyptic tradition stretches back beyond the beginnings of the people of Israel to Babylon and hoar antiquity; and John's memory was charged with phrases and visionary fancies from many times and places belonging to that tradition. Sometimes they come to him through the Old Testament, sometimes from less sacred legend, sometimes as vague and floating imagination from the general mind of man, dreaming on things to come.

Besides that there are reminiscences of later prophecies and consolations from Jewish or Christian writers. Hort described the occasion of the book thus:

'The day of the Lord which the writer of the Hebrews saw drawing nigh had already begun to break in blood and fire when St. John sent his Apocalypse to the Gentile Churches of Asia.'¹

¹ *Judaistic Christianity* (Macmillan, 1898), p. 160. This is a course of lectures, published after Dr. Hort's death. Another course was published (1897) with the title, *The Christian Ecclesia*. Both were edited by Dr. J. O. F. Murray, now Master of Selwyn College. They are scarcely more than sketches for the lecture room and they were written a good while ago. But Dr. Hort anticipated much that

It was composed, he thinks, when the Jewish war with Rome had begun which was to end with the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The sentence is so well turned, the view so simplifies the tangled relationships of literature to events, that assent is almost compelled. But reflection obliges us to hesitate. Irenaeus in his treatise 'against Heresies' (v. 30. 3) says that the Apocalypse 'was seen not long ago but almost in our own generation at the end of Domitian's reign' (*i.e.* about A.D. 95). Attempts are made to give another turn to his Greek, but that is the plain sense of it. It is true that some passages in the Apocalypse seem to imply that earlier date, and it is easy to fancy that the storm of A.D. 70 infects the whole. But we also find passages which seem to imply a still earlier date, the persecution of Nero. And it is hardly possible to deny that a very great deal can best be understood as reflecting the bitter days of Domitian. All falls into place if we imagine a Christian of Asia Minor, in the stress of Domitianic persecution, composing an Apocalypse for the encouragement of his brethren. He is imbued with the apocalyptic tradition, and gives his work a hero's name, as the author of that earlier apocalypse which was written to cheer the Maccabean saints put it forth under the patronage of Daniel: this was the apocalyptic convention, not deception. Such books have appeared before in Nero's time, when Titus besieged Jerusalem, and no doubt in still earlier periods of trial. Many of these 'consolations' have been his frequent companions and support. They all contribute phrase and hue and temper to his own inspiration. And if it be observed, as it certainly may be, that his bizarre was afterwards to be worked out by others, and few histories of the apostolic age are so instructive as these modest volumes. In another posthumous volume, *Cambridge and other Sermons* (Macmillan, 1898), there is a plain sermon on 'St. John the Evangelist' in which Dr. Hort told the story of S. John's life, as he conceived it, setting Apocalypse, Gospel, and epistles so naturally into the course of the church's developement through trial that it is difficult, after a fresh enjoyment of its scholarly simplicity, to dissolve the view presented and to form another. Cf. pp. 119 f. above.

Greek, for all it is so unlike the Gospel and epistles which flow as easily as a child's talk, nevertheless has certain affinities with these in vocabulary and in thought, that too fits in with the hypothesis. This is not the son of Zebedee's first crude assault upon a foreign language which he afterwards managed with artless cleverness, avoiding the difficulties of an ambitious style. It is a writer of rude Greek and a Jewish Christian of rugged temper who is writing when Johannine theology has begun to make its mark in Asia Minor. This is how Bousset (quoted by Dr. Sanday) puts the case :

‘It is certainly right when this Johannine colouring of the language is set down to the last redactor of the Apocalypse. But it may be seen again that this redactor has recast the material before him far more drastically than is commonly supposed. The parallels just collected appear to justify the supposition that the whole cycle of Johannine writings comes from circles which stood under the influence of John of Asia Minor. From this side too we arrive at the conclusion that ‘my servant John’ is not intended to be, and is not, any one else than John of Asia Minor. And when of late the conjecture has been thrown out that there existed in Asia Minor a language and style of a specifically Johannine school, it seems to me that the facts presented by the Apocalypse go to confirm this conjecture.’

Whether Bousset's ‘John of Asia’ is John the son of Zebedee is a question we will leave to further consideration in the next chapter. The Domitianic author of the Apocalypse is not this John. He narrates and applies the vision which he represents John as seeing. It may be he has more than that to go upon; that he narrates and applies the vision which John actually did see and in some earlier form told. Thus we should come near again to Hort's

view, while preserving at the same time the tradition of the church which Irenaeus hands down.

This criticism however, which must still be largely conjecture, no doubt grows tedious. The main point is strongly brought out by Bousset, that whatever the author of the Apocalypse inherited from earlier times he has made it all his own and writes spontaneously; that is, in this connexion, as he was inspired to write. And the inspiration came to him through the stress of persecution. In 1 Peter murmurs of a trial still to come are heard. In Hebrews a hard duty confronts the readers, but they 'have not yet resisted unto blood.' In the Apocalypse the seer is an exile for the faith on Patmos, a convict probably; and in this vision he sees multitudes coming out of the great tribulation, hears the cry of the souls that have been slain, and hears their cry answered by a command to wait till more be slain and the number of the martyrs be made up. In 1 Peter the cause of pagan enmity seems vague. In Hebrews it seems that Jewish patriotism is in rivalry with Christian loyalty. But in the Apocalypse the conflict is with an abomination; worship the emperor of Rome or die.

The book begins with a title of some elaboration, quite distinct of course from the terse 'apocalypse of John' with which it was registered in the canon of Scripture. This is marked by certain characteristic phrases or ideas which recur in what follows: it is 'the apocalypse of Jesus Christ'; 'things which must shortly come to pass' are shewn; John witnesses 'the word of God and the witness of Jesus Christ'; he who reads and keeps what is here written is blessed; 'the time is at hand.'

Then John greets the seven churches of Asia with prayer for grace and peace from him 'who is and was and is to come': this name is the more impressive from its violation of the rules of grammar, and it introduces some magnificent sentences concerning the advent of the Redeemer. This introduction closes

with liturgic solemnity: 'I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord God, which is and was and is to come, the all-ruler.'

Then John tells of his presence in Patmos—we feel the horror of persecution but he is reticent. He tells how he was rapt in the Spirit into the advent day of the Lord—so Hort, surely right, interprets 'the Lord's day'—and heard a voice like the trump of advent (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 52), and saw the Lord Jesus with eyes of fire and voice as the voice of many waters, who became dead and 'behold I am living for ever and ever.' John is bidden to write to the seven churches, and the letters to the seven churches follow.

The letters reveal the pressure of the persecution. It is spiritual and from within as well as from without. The faith itself is breaking up in heresies. Stern warnings alternate with tender forgiveness, encouragement, and sympathy. To two churches, the two that are weak and lowly, unalloyed praise is given. The lukewarmness of Laodicea is the worst fault of all. What pathos, beauty, courage in extremity of peril, and all through the presence of Christ who seems in these letters to be visiting his soldiers in the places where the line is hardest pressed. There are lurid passages in the body of the book where we almost doubt whether the author's temper is quite Christian. But how loving is the opening, how bright the close, and in the mid part what bursts of compassion. Love burns its way against cruel opposition. The book which tells of the wrath of the Lamb best shews what that wrath really is.

Then (iv.) a door is opened in heaven and the trumpet voice calls the seer to ascend. From this point we look with him and the angel who conducts him, the hierophant, sometimes at things in heaven, for the rest as from a height over scenes of far horizons. In heaven itself the immaterial centring of all upon the throne creates a sense of boundless space in which a liturgy freed from the limitations of ritual goes on.

About the throne and immediately round the throne liturgic hymns are sung: sometimes all creation diffused through earth and heaven swells the harmony.¹ Some years ago a book was written to prove a close and continuous relationship between the epistle to the Hebrews and the extant form of the Greek liturgies.² That was too fanciful. But it does appear that before the close of the first century the Christian liturgy was taking a more or less definite form, derived probably from the services of the synagogue. The epistle of Clement of Rome ends with a prayer of sustained grandeur which is almost certainly derived from the language customary, though no doubt free and fluid as yet, in the eucharistic worship of the church at Rome. Nor is it only in this concluding prayer that the liturgical character of Clement's language asserts itself. One is tempted to conjecture that a good deal of the priestly language and thought even in Hebrews may have been influenced by the eucharistic service in a still earlier and still more free and simple form: if so it is interesting to notice the far deeper doctrine which the

¹ Archbishop Benson points out that in the 'Choric Songs the Attributes and Beatitudes are Three when they are ascribed to GOD immediately round His Throne; that they are Seven when uttered by the Angels, and Four when offered by the rest of Creation. Numbers must be regarded as more than symbols when used in these relations to the Divine, the Perfect, and the Created.' But in xix. 1 this rule is broken in A.V. The late text added 'honour' to the 'salvation and glory and power' of the heavenly multitude round the throne. So in i. 11 'confusion has been caused for centuries by the false reading which intrudes into the Trumpet-Voice [of the Guide-Angel] language possible only for Christ and God, and so takes away the clue to subsequent utterances both of the same and other voices. But the Voices are distinct even when heard together as sometimes they are.' Notice too in the last verse of the book how the significance of the repeated 'Lord Jesus,' the name of the Lord's manhood, is spoiled by the added 'Christ' of the later text.

² *The Apostolic Liturgy and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, by John Edward Field (Rivingtons, 1882). In *L'Anaphore apostolique et ses témoins*, par Dom Paul Cagin (Paris, 1919), a fresh and scholarly attempt is made to recover 'the essential Eucharistic formula which may be considered as having Apostolic sanction and has formed the groundwork of all Catholic Liturgies.' See review by Dr. Armitage Robinson in *J. T. S.*, January 1920.

author to the Hebrews recognised in the Christian sacrifice. Dr. Murray thinks that something of the same kind may be observed in the epistle to the Ephesians: 'The literary affinities of great parts of the first three chapters are not "lyrical" but liturgical. The opening sentence is an act of adoration. In the next, thanksgiving passes into intercession. It is difficult not to believe that we have in them the fruit of many years' experience in leading the devotion of Christian congregations. Just as (S. Paul's) continuous practice in teaching and exhortation must be condensed and crystallised in the doctrinal and hortatory sections of this and other epistles.'¹

In the Apocalypse this liturgical character is conspicuous. The hymns are often like the hymns and prefaces of the later liturgies, such as the *Gloria in excelsis* or 'With angels and archangels' in our English service. None of them, probably, are transcripts from Christian worship, but they would seem to a Christian at the end of the first century a heavenly counterpart of his worship on earth. And the spirit of eucharistic worship is everywhere resurgent. Do not these sentences from Lightfoot describe the Apocalypse even more exactly than Clement's epistle? 'All things spiritual and material, all things above and below, the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of grace fall within the scope of this great sacramental system. Heaven and earth alike are full of God's glory; and shall they not be full of human thanksgiving also? This idea underlies the earliest liturgical forms; it underlies, or rather it absorbs, Clement's conception. There is no narrow ritual and no cramping dogma here. The conception is wide and comprehensive, as earth and sea and sky are wide and comprehensive. It inspires, explains, justifies, vivifies the sacramental principle.'²

¹ *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians*, edited by the Rev. J. O. F. Murray, D.D., with notes and introduction (Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges, 1914), p. xxxix.

² *The Apostolic Fathers: Part I, S. Clement of Rome*, vol. i. pp. 386-391.

If so, how consolatory for those persecuted saints. Their worship was real effectual divine. What they said and did on earth was the echo of the compassionate and triumphant liturgy in heaven. While faith and worship persisted in the ancient purity they were not left desolate or unprotected.

For this liturgy in heaven governs history. The 'unveiling' shows that the violence of the world does not proceed by chance or according to the evil will of men. Great actors in heaven intervene so that all moves on to an appointed end. In the right hand of him that was seated on the throne a sealed book is seen which none, so at first it seems, can open. But the Lion of the tribe of Judah comes—and behold the Lion is the Lamb which stands as though it had been slain—and opens the seals. When the first seal is opened the woes that devastate the earth are beheld in their essential heavenly counterpart. And in heaven they are not uncontrolled. Leading the four riders of war, famine, and death is Christ the mounted archer with the white horse (vi. 2; cf. xix. 11 and Ps. xlv.), and he 'came forth conquering and meaning to conquer.' Six of the seven seals are opened. Then the sequence is interrupted, as it always is throughout the vision. Before the last event in each series, the opening of the seventh seal, the sounding of the seventh trumpet, there is a pause and an episode. After the pouring of the seventh vial the expected end develops into a complex and still preparatory course of judgements, and for all the beauty of the new Jerusalem the vision reaches no finality: the last act of all is prayer and promise: an epigram from Flaubert comes to mind, 'Reality is always misrepresented by those who wish to make it lead up to a conclusion; God alone may do that.'

The episode before the opening of the seventh seal is another sealing, the sealing of the servants of God on their foreheads. First come the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed out of every tribe of the sons of

Israel. Liturgic pomp is most impressive here. 'Of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand sealed: of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand. . . .' The stately list of the ancient elect is read and ratified with a final 'sealed,' like the 'judgement written' in Psalm cxlix. Then, as in Ps. lxxxvii., the multitude innumerable are gathered in with these. Privilege is transferred to wider commonalty—*mundo maiore sive communi*. The motley crowds from the streets and quays of Ephesus, from London and New York, are born anew in Sion. Liturgy in heaven is not pomp but love in realism, medicine for the unartistic sorrows of a time of trial.

'These are they which come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes' (vii. 14 ff.).

After the seven seals the seven trumpets (viii. ff.). These herald sharper woes, and the sense of impending judgement grows awful. But before the seventh trumpet sounds a promise is interposed. It is like the promise made to the Maccabees in Daniel and fulfilled for them (Dan. xii. 7):

'And the angel which I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever . . . that there shall be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according

to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets' (x. 5 ff.).

Then follows a good deal of strange symbolic narrative in the antique style of apocalypse. The measuring of the temple in xi. seems to put us back to the months before the destruction of Jerusalem. But the older promise (which might seem to have failed) is fused anew in more spiritual faith. The temple here means not the Jewish edifice. Nor is 'the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified,' Jerusalem. It stands in a manner for Rome, but for the Roman dominion rather than the city: more profoundly it corresponds to S. John's 'whole world that lieth in the evil one,' and for our Lord's crucifixion therein we may again compare Heb. vi. 6. This is one of the passages where the Johannine thought jostles with crude apocalyptic imagery, and that is why we should not adopt the marginal rendering of R.V. in x. 6, 'delay' instead of 'time.' 'Delay' seems more intelligible because it is commonplace. As in S. John's Gospel, as in the Christian liturgies, the element of 'time' is transcended in this apocalypse. At the opening the seer was rapt in Spirit into the advent day. The things he sees 'must shortly come to pass,' but he sees these things as heavenly realities concurrent with the events that are in the actual intolerable present taking place on earth; and the concluding promise and prayer, 'Yea, I come quickly. Even so: come, Lord Jesus,' issues from a very different stage of faith than S. Luke knew in the primitive church at Jerusalem (Acts i. 6).

This jostling rather than mingling of Christian philosophy with sacramental naïveté, and sometimes with crude apocalyptic imagery, should be kept in mind when we muse upon the fearful pictures of punishment which disturb many readers of the Apocalypse. It may be that the author did sometimes fall short of the ideal of the Saviour's love, and somewhat, here and there,

measured the 'wrath of the Lamb' amiss. It is evident that inspiration leaves room for human weakness, and there is a very human element in this book : it is hard to keep the fire of Christ's utter charity bright under insolent tyranny when broken-hearted men and women 'desire to see one of the days of the Son of man and see it not.' But on the whole, and very mightily, this prophet makes such men and women see these 'days.' And the critical probability if not proof, that this Apocalypse preserves older language and ideas which have been thought anew by its late Christian author, must make us pause before we allow the first obvious interpretation of his ruder imagery. That at least seems to have been the instinct of the earlier ages of our Church. Hear what is said in an article in *The Church Quarterly* for October 1880, on 'Christian imaginations of heaven' :

'The earlier creeds set forth the Life everlasting, and do not set forth the everlasting Fire, though no Christian of their day, so far as we know, dared to deny it. There is a reticence : and it is certainly observable in the popular symbolic ornamentation used by the Primitive Church as distinguished from later Mediaeval work. . . . Certain it is that, though the presence of the Lord in glory with saints is very early represented, both in sepulchral decoration, and in the larger Basilicas, and though He is in about 400 years surrounded by the mystic splendours of the Apocalypse, there is no contrasted Inferno that we know of for twice that time and its introduction is an archaeological or artistic landmark for the entrance of Church History on its Mediaeval stage. No "painted hell" existed that we know of earlier than the eleventh or twelfth century mosaics of Torcello ; nor is any such representation on record, except the painting which Methodius is said to have executed to stimulate the emotional aestheticism of a certain King Bogoris of Bulgaria. But at whatever time men ceased to

separate the ideas of Eternal Happiness from the dark relief of Eternal Pain, they had introduced the latter by the date of the early Venetian mosaics. Florence repeated the lesson in S. Giovanni, and the illuminated service books soon carried it all over the world. . . . The terrors of the soul are in fact, ethnic, or heathen, or common to all souls: all the consolations belong to the Faith.'

At xi. 15 the seventh angel blows his trumpet. Choric songs are sung. The inner shrine of the heavenly temple is opened. The end seems to be drawing near.

But the long episodes succeed of the war in heaven and the wild beasts. These are closed by the vision of the Lamb standing on the mount of Sion with the company of those who have his name and the name of his Father written on their forehead. The voice as of many waters is heard again, and the voice of harpers harping on their harps and singing the new song. The virgin company of the hundred and forty-four thousand, the firstfruits of mankind, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, alone may learn this song. How certain does the Apocalypse make eternal life. Heaven is full of living saints. Death works on earth, but death is no end, it is a mysterious act in life. Turn the page and read the assurance:

'And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, may they rest from their labours; for their works follow with them' (xiv. 13).

Sometimes this immortality is declared in frank and gracious imagery: sometimes, as in this last quoted passage, the spiritual fact is essentialised with scarcely any aid from figure. But the fact vivifies the whole Apocalypse. Without it there could be no heaven at all, no Lamb without his followers and friends. In Hebrews also we were now and then 'with angels and

archangels and all the company of heaven,' but the joy of this populous heaven infects the Apocalypse all through. Every period of persecution and laying down of life for a cause has been a period of invigoration of faith in immortality. And so history still proves.

After all the end is not yet revealed. After the seven trumpets the seven vials have to be poured out (xv. 5). But when the seventh has been poured out the judgement of Babylon is at last consummated (xvii.) and the judgement of all 'the dead' is held, and death and hell are cast into the lake of fire (xx. 11 ff.). Then are seen the new heaven and the new earth and the holy city the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven, and the voice proclaims from the throne :

'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them : and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes ; and death shall be no more ; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more ; the first things are passed away. And he that sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write : for these words are faithful and true. And he spake unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit these things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son ' (xxi. 1 ff.).

Thus the sorely tried soldiers of the faith in Asia Minor were encouraged. In the stern words that follow (as before in the letters to the churches) the faint-hearted and the traitors are warned. The glorious picture of the city of eternal light brings the vision to an end, and in xxii. 8 ff. we seem to watch the seer gradually waking from his trance, and all concludes as 'the apocalypse of Jesus Christ' himself :

'I, Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you

these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.'

The author, not the seer, adds his testimony to which he calls his Lord to witness; and the last book of the canon closes with a return to the Galilean simplicity:

'Amen: come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Even so.'

IV

S. JOHN : THE LIFE OF JESUS IS THE META- PHYSIC OF THE WORD

AT the time of our Lord's birth the Jewish people were swayed by a world of thoughts about the kingdom of God. The apocalypses had expressed and nourished this hope. When the Lord Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, he answered this expectation by proclaiming that the time was fulfilled, the kingdom was at hand, men must repent and believe this good news. That proclamation of the immediate coming of the kingdom was the good news, the Gospel. He preached that Gospel throughout his ministry ; purged the vulgar hope of its baser elements ; died to bring about its true fulfilment ; and in defeat was victorious : when he died the kingdom was indeed planted in the world.

The apocalypses were always full of the kingdom. Sometimes, not always, they spoke of the Messiah or Christ, who would bring the kingdom and reign therein. At his baptism our Lord was 'anointed' with the Spirit and received assurance that he was the beloved Son of God his Father. His apostles at last confessed their belief that he was the Christ. That claim was the 'blasphemy' for which he was condemned in the high priest's court. Yet it is doubtful whether he ever claimed the Christship for himself. Always the kingdom, only now and then the Christ : that is the theme of the Jewish apocalypses. Always the kingdom, always the Father, always the children of the Father, but as little as may be about the Christ :

that is the theme of our Lord's Gospel. It is not of course that he is less than the Christ, but that he is so much more; so much more because he makes himself so little for our sake, and loses his life to find it a thousandfold as a ransom for many.

By S. Paul the kingdom is not often named: 'Christ,' 'Christ Jesus,' 'Jesus Christ' is ever on his lips. This was natural since in its lowly guise the kingdom had come when the Lord died, and since it was to Jesus himself as Christ that Saul was converted. In his conversion he was convinced of the reality of the Lord's resurrection. The crucifixion and the resurrection completed his ancestral Pharisaic faith. Henceforth not the law, but spiritual union with the crucified and living Christ was the centre. So he taught forgiveness and renewal and new life 'in Christ' according to the Spirit. So he deepened the expectation in the church of the advent of Jesus as the Christ in glory. So he accepted the revelation of the expansion of Israel; all should be one, Jew and Gentile together, 'in Christ.' So he foresaw the growth of the church as the spiritual body of Christ, growing still in wisdom and comprehensiveness, till all men should be 'one full-grown man in Christ.' As Paul runs his course, ever deepening his own mystical union with the Redeemer, the Jewish scenery of faith fades more and more; heart-hope fructifies more and more richly.

S. Paul died in Nero's persecution. The era of 'fiery trial' began with the Neronian martyrdoms. The fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was the culminating point in this season of faith on trial; though the trial continued, ever gathering intensity through the reign of Domitian to the end of the century. The Jewish revolt from Rome and its consequence must have been foreboded by many who watched the signs of the times, and Matthew and Luke record that our Lord foretold it. Luke especially seems to show that our Lord taught how this would be in some sense a coming of the Son of man, a coming if not the coming. When

the day drew near: this teaching was better understood, and the authors of the epistle to the Hebrews and of the first epistle of S. Peter encouraged their brethren by the promise of Christ's revelation of his presence in the trials that threatened them. There is reason to suppose that the trial contemplated in the epistle to the Hebrews was immediately connected with the Jewish war, and the epistle is not only an exhortation to duty; it develops the theology of the faith out of the circumstances of the hour. So does the Apocalypse of S. John in which consolations belonging to earlier stages of trial are perhaps remembered and refined in the fires of Domitian's persecution.

Thus the high priesthood of the Lord in Hebrews and the heavenly ritual of the Apocalypse rise from the vanishing of ancient Jewish ritual, and discover new and richer views of the divine person of Christ. Nor less is the doctrine of his true manhood elucidated. Believers were turning back in memory to 'the days of his flesh.' The earliest Gospels were being written. His example was an influence as the expectation of the advent in glory receded, and the certainty of the advent of 'to-day' brought its summons to follow him loyally as 'captain.' But the retrospect had difficulty as well as inspiration. The obscurity and suffering, the limitations of manhood, the 'scandal of the cross,' the shock of realism: here was the first setting of that problem of the Gospels which has recurred at intervals ever since. The solution was sketched in the epistle to the Hebrews. An artist author there succeeds the mystical philosopher S. Paul. The imaginative common-sense of the mass of believers asserted itself in the face of peril. They would follow his lead who for their sakes had lain in darkness and the shadow of death, and now came to call his followers in a glory of holiness which seemed anything but glory to the cruel world. So, now they saw, it had been in the days of his flesh. The glory always had been in the humiliation, not after it as a reward. Glory in humiliation, the eternal

through the realism of the visible, the Godhead through the manhood: this was the sacramental principle which solved the problem and would henceforth be the current rule for thought and conduct in a church which could never be entirely composed of mystics or philosophers. Once more men walked in the plain man's Galilean 'way'; only there was light upon that way since Paul had known the Master which could never be lost again.

The sacramental principle was carried out by one who was neither greater nor less than S. Paul: his distinction is that he completes New Testament revelation. By him all that has gone before is brought together and expressed with consummate simplicity. New influences from a wider world helped to press out his thought. The ground may still be Jewish, but if so Hellas and Asia play upon it far more freely than ever before. And with all this the writer, whom we call S. John, is original: while he remembers and fuses and re-acts, he creates.¹

John, the son of Zebedee and brother of James, after adventures of which we have no certain knowledge, seems to have spent a quiet presbyterate at Ephesus where he lived and taught till he died at the end of the first century. From the new world at Ephesus, where the multitude that none can number of all people and languages thronged the streets and quays, he looked back upon the Galilean Gospel, and remembering deeper things in the Lord's teaching than other disciples could easily harmonise with their Jewish preparation for the faith, he constantly explained these to his affectionate

¹ Cf. Pater, essay on Dante Gabriel Rossetti in *Appreciations* (Macmillan, 1904), 'Practically, the church of the Middle Age by its aesthetic worship, its sacramentalism, its real faith in the resurrection of the flesh, had set itself against that Manichean opposition of spirit and matter, and its results in men's ways of taking life; and in this Dante is the central representative of its spirit. To him, in the vehement and impassioned heat of his conceptions, the material and the spiritual are fused and blent: if the spiritual attains the definite visibility of a crystal, what is material loses its earthiness and impurity.'

flock. Before or after he died a disciple composed a Gospel from his teaching, as Mark had done from Peter's. Somewhat slowly, not without suspicion, it won its way abroad. The 'elder' of Ephesus had served his Asian parish in retirement: he had not felt or been felt much in the current of western church developement. His own people had gradually grown to understand his bold meditative mind: its publication surprised strangers, and the Asian Gospel was too modern for them. In four respects especially it demanded time for old-fashioned readers to adjust their point of view.

First in its revelation of the Godhead of our Lord, the sacramental principle was worked out in 'the perfection of ultimate utterance.'¹ What Hebrews had adumbrated in philosophic rhetoric was now illuminated by a narrative, in children's language, of the life of the Son of God on earth; a real life on earth and truly of the Son of God, the eternal ever shining through the temporal. This is the Gospel of 'Ecce homo' and also of 'My Lord and my God.' In homeliest love among his friends God, who is love, is here revealed. This love, being homely natural, is intense: being intense its effect flows far forth. So this Godhead of the Johannine Christ is not exclusive but comprehending. The Son draws men with himself into Godhead with the Father.

Secondly, the advent now emerges from all its traditional pomp and scenery. There is no 'here' or 'there'; no far-forward gaze towards a point of time to come. Hope passes into the peace of an eternal 'now.' Through the 'other Comforter' the Son who goes, comes. He is always here. Advent and judgement are in his eternal presence. Only, what still remains unknown must be known to each and all. He must be seen 'as he is,' that ultimately we may be like him.

Thirdly, and in accordance with this, eternal life is 'to know God.' The future resurrection is interpreted

¹ A phrase from an unpublished lecture of Dr. Scott Holland.

through the communion of saints which can be enjoyed without delay. 'I am the resurrection and the life,' said the Lord. The Son, going to the Father, carries his friends with him, from the 'mansion' of the senses—the sweet intercourse of Galilee—into the mansion of the Spirit, a fuller communion which death cannot interrupt.

And fourthly, behind this Gospel there are the two church sacraments, baptism and the supper of the Lord, and the whole order of instituted church life, which was already highly organised by the end of the first century. All this the new Gospel continually lifted from the letter to the Spirit, a process always apt to cause dismay. On the other hand there have always been and will be some sincerest souls who feel that the organised church, Jerusalem built as a city, is far removed from Galilean simplicity. To such the elder of Ephesus answers that this is the only way to save a world which lies wholly in the evil one. That is half the burden of his epistle, and in epistle and Gospel alike he tells what the other evangelists do not expressly tell: how Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the whole world.

Now to justify and illustrate this sketch of the Johannine writing and doctrine.

In 1880 Westcott edited the Gospel according to S. John for the *Speakers' Commentary*. The book has been issued as a commentary by itself since then and has run through many editions. For insight into the theology of the Gospel it remains almost unrivalled; though advance has been made of late in knowledge of contemporary thought and some useful studies have appeared in which the influences of time and place are more precisely estimated than Westcott could or cared to do.¹ But the introduction to this commentary has

¹ See for instance E. F. Scott, *The fourth Gospel, its purpose and theology* (T. & T. Clark): Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel* (Williams & Norgate). DuBose's *The reason of Life* (Longmans) has already

not quite so permanent a value. The ancient testimony and all the material of criticism is marshalled with the scrupulous accuracy of the great scholar. Yet the conclusions are too easily drawn. Neither Westcott nor Lightfoot¹ felt sufficiently the difficulty

been mentioned; Dr. DuBose was more concerned with making the Johannine thoughts current coin to-day than with origins and influences. Hort's *The Way, the Truth and the Life* (Macmillan) must also be mentioned. Hort, like Westcott, wrote this long ago, but Hort cared more for history and science as well as for philosophy than Westcott did, and the foundations of this book (which are not displayed) go deep into the facts of first-century life. It is indeed a golden treasury of Christian philosophy expressed in simple language with profound thought: the argument requires close attention, which is made easier by the prefixed analysis. In *Cambridge Biblical Essays* there are two essays on the Gospel, by the Dean of S. Paul's and Dr. A. E. Brooke. Dr. Brooke defends its historical character; Dr. Inge treats it as pure theology, saying little about date or author but apparently taking for granted that it is of the second century. Dr. Inge has also written on this Gospel in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, and no formal argument against early date and close connexion with S. John is so strong as his elucidation of the theology on this presupposition: it is a creative restoration of faith through criticism. Dr. Inge's recent lectures on Plotinus show how much this restoration owes to his large knowledge of the whole range of philosophy. And every student of S. John should at least have looked through the window of philosophy. Dr. Henry Jackson used to tell beginners in Greek philosophy to steep themselves in Plato's *Republic*, and beginners in the Johannine philosophy would find it worth while to read *The Apology*, *The Phaedo*, and *The Republic*, if not in Greek, in Jowett's version, or in the translations in Macmillan's *Golden Treasury*.

¹ In *Biblical Essays* and in *Essays on the work entitled 'Supernatural Religion'* (Macmillan). H. Latimer Jackson's *Problem of the fourth Gospel* is the best summary of the critical arguments (Cambridge, 1918). Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in research and debate* (New York), argues against John the apostle's ever having been in Ephesus; he writes vigorously but not with all the judicial carefulness that is required. He should be checked by the more conservative inquiry of Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents* (Cambridge, 2 vols.; see above, p. 6), to whom Bacon often refers with respect. A third volume, entirely devoted to S. John, is expected from Dr. Stanton before long. The article in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* on 'Gospels' is by Stanton. In *Encyclopædia Biblica* Schmiedel writes of the fourth Gospel in the article on 'John, son of Zebedee'; E. A. Abbott in the article on 'Gospels.' Dr. Abbott's *Fourfold Gospel* has been mentioned above, p. 17. His *Johannine Grammar* and *Johannine Vocabulary* are also valuable. In *The character and authorship of the fourth Gospel* (Scribner) Principal Drummond, in *The criticism of the fourth Gospel*

which is caused by the lack of early evidence for S. John's ever having been in Asia Minor. Of course they knew the lack and noticed it, but it seemed to them quite easy to dispose of the difficulty. It may be they were guided by a right instinct, but the point has been so strongly pressed since their day that fresh attention must be paid to it and the argument must be arranged anew.

There is no plain statement that John the apostle was in Asia till we come to Irenaeus at the end of the second century. Justin Martyr's reference to John as author of the Apocalypse is the nearest we get to such evidence. That carries us back to about A.D. 150, but the reference is not definite enough to build much upon.

Nor is there definite quotation from the Gospel in the early second century. What seem to be echoes and reminiscences of it may be explained as echoes of an Ephesian theology. That theology indeed culminated in the Johannine Gospel. But it may have been a language, a mode of thought, which floated through Asia Minor many years before the Gospel was composed. This may be the source of those early second-century phrases and ideas which have too lightly been set down in the same lists as the real quotations of somewhat later years.

In the early second century there is no clear evidence for the existence of the fourth Gospel, no clear evidence for the presence of John the apostle in Asia Minor. There is evidence for the presence of some one named John, but that title 'apostle,' which would remove all doubt, is never given to this person.

(Oxford) Dr. Sanday review the critical problem and confirm a moderate conservatism.

Loisy's *Le quatrième Évangile* (Paris, 1903, but now out of print) goes, like Abbott's books, far beyond literary and historical criticism: it is a monument of the best 'modernist' scholarship and piety.

Good small commentaries on the Gospel (and the Epistles) have been written by Dr. A. Plummer in the *Cambridge Bible* and the *Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges*.

That after all is the whole case against S. John. For minor aggravations of it, such as the contention that the last chapter of the Gospel is an appendix with interpolations made for the purpose of implying the apostle's authorship, fall away if the main objections can be answered. And perhaps they can. Perhaps Westcott and Lightfoot were justified in obeying instinct; though yet again perhaps we may find that their absolute acceptance of the apostle as author pure and simple was too hasty.

Tradition is generally worth more than was allowed in the reaction of fifty years ago. And the tradition which Irenaeus handed on was a respectable one. Irenaeus wrote at the end of the century, but he was born about A.D. 130, and as the Gospel was in any case not written much before the end of the first century, his own life nearly reaches back to its appearance.

Then that withholding of the title 'apostle' is disappointing to us late inquirers, but it need not have had much significance to the apostle himself or to his friends. It may be that we fill out that title too particularly from S. Paul's insistence upon it. On the one hand we learn from his epistles and from the Acts¹ that others beside the Twelve were called apostles. On the other hand opposition obliged S. Paul to magnify his office, and even when he magnified it he seems to show that an apostle was not always so wonderfully thought of by every one (1 Cor. iv. 9). Of course the apostles were very great: with what inner lasting greatness 2 Corinthians tells. And they had authority; established, we may like to fancy, by their courageous service in the earliest persecution after the martyrdom of S. Stephen when 'all were scattered abroad except the apostles' (Acts viii. 1). But it does not follow that they would always be addressed or spoken of by their title of dignity, nor even that

¹ See Acts xiv. 14; Rom. xvi. 7; 2 Cor. viii. 23; and Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, pp. 76-91.

all of them always would take an active part in the ecumenical ordering of the church. The latter part of S. John's career may have been a quiet episcopate in Ephesus, *fallentis semita vitæ*, where he imbued a not very extensive flock with a theology which was to open the ancient Gospel to new worlds and future ages, but at which the great practical western church looked askance for a while—there were rumours that Cerinthus, a most unjohannine heretic, was the real author—and which no one was very much concerned to vindicate for the unpretending elder of Ephesus. His own people might hardly be aware of his intellectual eminence. Did he not talk with a simpler tongue than other doctors, and was not the sum of all his instructions, 'Little children, love one another'?

The elder of Ephesus; John the elder: was he a different person from the apostle? Of him there certainly are traces from the beginning of the second century. In particular there is the testimony of Papias preserved by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39). Papias in this passage first speaks of presbyters or elders from whom he himself learned what the 'disciples of the Lord' had said. These 'elders' are men who have known the 'disciples' but have not themselves known the Lord. 'Elder' hardly looks like an ecclesiastical title in this connection. It is still a fluid word, as in 1 Pet. v. 1, where it seems to bear an official sense but is immediately afterwards connected with the 'younger men' in no official sense: and notice how the apostle Peter designates himself a 'fellow-elder' in this same place. Such then are Papias' 'elders.' His 'disciples' are the apostles who have known the Lord; their names are given, and John is among them. That of course proves nothing as to this John having dwelt in Papias' own country, Asia Minor. But then Papias goes on to speak of Aristion and the 'presbyter' or 'elder John' as disciples of the Lord who are still saying things which he learns from his presbyters. The point is in the tenses of the two

verbs. The other 'disciples of the Lord' had passed away and spoke no longer: Aristion and John still live and still speak, and here the inference would be fair that they speak in Asia Minor where Papias' presbyters could hear them. But the difficulty lies in the distinction drawn between John who was one of the 'disciples' and John 'the elder.' Some think it establishes the existence of a second John, 'the elder,' and they therefore discredit the presence of John the apostle in Asia. They draw attention to two other fragments of Papias which have been found in two late Greek writers of the ninth and of the seventh or eighth centuries.¹ In these fragments we are merely told that John was killed by the Jews, not when he was killed; the statement looks suspiciously like an inference from our Lord's answer to the mother of James and John (Mark x. 39, Matt. xx. 23); and the whole evidence is too late and too vague to build a tradition of the apostle's early martyrdom upon it. Returning then to Papias' acknowledged testimony we ask ourselves whether the distinction is after all obvious. Dom Chapman gave some years ago² a simple explanation of Papias' words. He has mentioned John among the 'disciples' or apostles all of whom except John have passed from this life. Then he mentions John again with another 'disciple' as still living. That there may be no doubt about the John who is associated with Aristion being the same John as has just been named among the disciples, Papias adds in his second mention of him the title by which, as the second and third epistles shew, he was commonly known. 'The presby-

¹ See Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, p. 166 ff.

² *John the Presbyter and the Fourth Gospel*, by Dom John Chapman, O.S.B. (Oxford, 1911). Compare Bousset (*Ency. Bibl.* 'Apocalypse'): 'Whatever interpretation we put on Papias . . . it is at least certain that Papias speaks not of two Johns in Asia Minor—the apostle and the presbyter—but of one John whom we are to look for as a near neighbour of Papias in space and time.'

Aristion (sometimes spelled 'Ariston' in antiquity) is he whose name has been found in an Armenian manuscript as the author of the last twelve verses of S. Mark. See Swete, *S. Mark*, pp. ciii ff.

ters' were the old men known to Papias who had known the apostles: 'The Presbyter' is the unassuming title by which the last surviving apostle was honoured at Ephesus.

Let us think then of S. John as exercising during his latter years a quiet apostolate at Ephesus. There he repeated his memories of the life and teaching of the Lord. We have seen in our first chapter that it is reasonable to suppose our Lord to have gone beyond the forms of Jewish apocalyptic in his conversation with the disciples. S. Luke in particular sometimes records utterances which link the Galilean Gospel with the Johannine.¹ These utterances may have passed over the heads of the others but found resting place in the meditation of S. John, and long years of spiritual communion with his Lord, still present though unseen, would order and deepen such memories. 'The Son of man shall come' was the Lord's commoner way of speaking. But he also said 'The kingdom of God is among you,' and this presence, this coming in an 'eternal now,' was what S. John's temperament, contact with Greek and Asian thought, and experience of trial and support, fitted him to think out. So we may readily believe that the doctrine of the fourth Gospel is derived from our Lord himself, actually taught by him in the days of his flesh, and carried on by him through the Spirit in his ascended state.

Nevertheless we must suppose the language and presentation of this teaching to have taken its peculiar form from the author of the fourth Gospel. 'The kingdom of God is among you' is Johannine thought in synoptic phrase. The same must be said of another passage which is often quoted as a like example (Matt. xi. 25 ff., Luke x. 21 ff.).² The style of our Lord's

¹ See pp. 33 ff., and compare a sentence from De Quincey's essay on Judas Iscariot: ' . . . hearing daily from his master a sublime philosophy that rested for its key-note upon the advent of vast revolutions among men.'

² See below, p. 187.

discourse in the fourth Gospel is the style of the Gospel itself. Sometimes it is almost impossible to decide where the Saviour's words end, where the evangelist's comment begins, as for instance in iii. 10-21. Moreover it is also the style of the three epistles. Dionysius of Alexandria is convincing when he argues from Greek style that one John cannot have written both the Gospel and the Apocalypse. It may be as convincingly argued from Greek style that the Gospel and epistles come from the same pen, and that this pen has also shaped the Lord's discourses within the Gospel.¹

But whose pen was this? Not, it would seem, S. John's own. There is, in truth, little reason to start from the presupposition that it was. In the ancient notices of authorship the 'writing' of a book is a very general term. Many if not most of the books of the New Testament were composed, or owed their final shape to others than those from whom they were ultimately derived.² As S. Mark stood to S. Peter in the composition of his Gospel so some pupil of S. John may have stood to him. The observation has not much weight perhaps, but it has been observed that a certain

¹ The style of the various writers of the New Testament has never been better treated than in the little book of W. H. Simcox, *The Writers of the New Testament, their style and characteristics* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1898). If any one wishes to work out the subject for himself he will find the tables of words useful at the end of Grimm and Thayer's *Lexicon of the Greek Testament* (T. & T. Clark, 1886). Since that lexicon was published the papyri have been drawn upon to illustrate the popular Greek to which the New Testament is so nearly related. Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East* (English translation, Hodder & Stoughton) may be consulted: also Milligan's *Selections from the Greek Papyri* (Cambridge), and Moulton's *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (T. & T. Clark, vol. i., 1906; vol. ii. part i., 1909). Mr. A. D. Knox, fellow of King's College, Cambridge, who has gone deeply into the later Greek, insists that the agreement of New Testament Greek with the papyri must not be pressed: the papyri are lawless, the New Testament observes certain peculiar but strict grammar rules: see a paper read before the Cambridge Philological Society, October 23, 1919, a summary of which was published in the *University Reporter*, November 4, 1919. Mr. Knox perhaps recognised the varieties of style within the Greek Testament too little.

² See above, pp. 23 f., 44 ff., 61, 122, 148.

preface to the Gospel seems to speak of S. John as dictating it, not writing it himself.¹ And these are considerations which recommend the hypothesis of the writer or evangelist mediating the recollections of his master.

It cannot be denied that the historical accuracy of this Gospel is in some points doubtful. There are other points, it is true, on which it seems more accurate than the earlier Gospels. A notable one is the relation of the last supper to the passover. Mark and Matthew make it the passover meal, taken by the Lord and his disciples on the same evening as the rest of the people. In John it is clear that they took their last meal together the evening before the passover. A phrase in Luke—‘With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I die’—gains significance when read in the light of S. John. As elsewhere Luke stands between the other synoptists and S. John, who in this matter seems to preserve the true tradition. Most of the older commentators dwell upon the knowledge of places and customs in Jerusalem shewn by the evangelist: that is part of their proof that he was an ‘eye-witness.’ Later critics treated the argument with slight respect, but quite lately it has come forward again in partly new form: Dr. Israel Abrahams² is one of a number of Jewish scholars who find remarkable familiarity with ancient Jewish rites and customs in this Gospel. This may confirm the story of the fourth Gospel in which the one year’s ministry with one passover in Jerusalem, implied by the synoptists, expands to a three years’ ministry with four visits to Jerusalem; though an evangelist might himself know Jerusalem well and yet be mistaken about the frequency of the Lord’s visits there.

The recognition of the Lord as Messiah by Philip and Nathanael at the beginning is not really incon-

¹ See Burkitt, *Two Lectures on the Gospels*, pp. 67 ff. (Macmillan, 1901).

² *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels* (Cambridge, 1917).

sistent with the confession of S. Peter at the end of the ministry, especially when the purpose of the whole Johannine Gospel is considered with regard to the Messiahship. That title is put into the background, its ordinary meaning is rejected as inadequate; quite in accordance with what we have already seen to have been our Lord's own attitude.¹ And all this preliminary intercourse with disciples before the call narrated by the synoptists has been put in quite a reasonable light by the late Master of Trinity Hall.² These conversations were held in the closing year. When spring came—'the time when kings go out to war'—the Lord sought his friends by the seashore and they obeyed an expected call.

Again in the account of the feeding of the five thousand, it is from the Johannine narrative that we learn the apocalyptic character of this feast in the wilderness: the people would make the Lord a king; he prayed on the mountain that night in preparation for the decisive discourse next day on the bread of life, which checked the popular messianic enthusiasm and inaugurated the second stage of the ministry. All the evangelists record this feeding of the multitude. In the synoptic Gospels another feast of like character is—it seems at first sight superfluously—recorded. The importance of these feasts in the developement of the Saviour's work is evidently felt; but only in S. John is it made clear. And yet again, this does not prove that the Johannine narrative is pure history. This evangelist might have perceived, as we do now, that explanation was needed and might therefore have filled up the story from such sources as he could find; the question would still remain, what kind of sources these were.

And there is the very difficult problem of the miracles. These are called 'signs' in the Johannine Gospel and

¹ See above, pp. 14 ff., 161.

² *Pastor pastorum, or the schooling of the Apostles by our Lord*, by Rev. Henry Latham, Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge (Deighton, Bell & Co., 1890).

the term is significant : the inner meaning is intended to be more than the outward fact. Yet it is impossible to suppose that S. John, the companion of the Lord, invented 'signs' for purposes of allegory which had no basis in plain fact. And yet again the 'signs' in this Gospel are markedly different from the miracles in the earlier Gospels. Compare the turning of the water into wine with the stilling of the storm. Both are worked upon the elements of nature. But in the storm all is nature in the open air. The act is marvellous yet harmonises with our Lord's person and our growing sense of the mystery of nature. The turning of the water into wine makes us think of the mystery of the eucharist, the bread and wine which is or becomes the sacred body and blood. As we read on and ponder the discourse on the bread of life and notice how often the two sacraments are, without direct mention, explained and deepened in this Gospel, such thought seems reasonable, though difficult to complete with precision : and the question recurs, What in plain fact happened ?

The raising of Lazarus is more perplexing still. No doubt such a mighty work would account for the enthusiasm of the multitude at the entry into Jerusalem : but does that need to be so accounted for ? It might be that fear of the Jews made the earlier evangelists keep silence because they did not wish to get the family of Lazarus into trouble. But is not such an explanation rather far-fetched ? Is not their silence really strange ? And again, compare this raising with the simple, almost 'natural,' stories of Jairus' daughter and the widow of Nain. What a difference, not merely in the degree of the marvellous, but in the whole atmosphere. At Bethany it is a 'sign.' The supreme significance of the narrative is in the words 'I am the resurrection and the life.' The actual calling of the corpse from the dead is invested with a kind of horror, as though to imply that not in such abnormal interference, but in the divine fulfilment of the law of universal life—the theme of the whole Johannine

Gospel—is the ‘authority’ (cf. i. 12) of the Son of God revealed. We may indeed reflect that while we moderns are obsessed with the problem of miracle, S. John would be untroubled by it; or that to him, immersed in consciousness of eternal life suffusing time and space, the raising of a four-days-dead man might seem a very little thing in comparison. We may instinctively reject the idea of the whole story being an allegory of the raising of the Christian out of the Jewish church: yet still we ask ourselves, What really happened? how far have the apostle’s recollections undergone change in lapse of years or in the telling? And, after all, did the writer of this Gospel mean this narrative to be taken literally: did his immediate readers, the people who had listened to S. John’s teaching at Ephesus, take it literally?

The last query is of considerable importance. When Clement of Alexandria called this a ‘spiritual’ Gospel the usage of his time would, on the whole, lead us to understand his adjective pretty nearly in the sense of ‘allegorical.’ It is possible that we embarrass our reverence with difficulties which early Ephesian reverence did not feel, when we defend the miracles (which are not called ‘miracles’) in this gospel. On the other hand we are not thoroughly versed in the use of language in early Ephesus and Alexandria; and we are prejudiced by our advancing but still imperfect knowledge of the relation of ‘matter’ to ‘spirit.’ True reverence will be neither sceptical nor credulous in the matter. We shall remember that ‘superstition is the substitution of human for divine means of approaching God,’¹ shall suspend judgement, be ascetic in the exercise of intellect, and pray with much humility that we may never spoil the Gospel according to S. John as a means of approaching God through Jesus Christ. So weaning the soul, we may nevertheless reflect that the difficulty would be lessened if we postulate a disciple of S. John for the composing of the apostle’s teaching

¹ Newman, *Lectures on Justification*, xiii.

into a written Gospel. The disciple would be deeply interested in the doctrine of the Lord Jesus which his master repeated and interpreted. The events of the Galilean ministry would impress him less forcibly. 'I am the resurrection and the life' would work within his mind and fall into place within the drama he constructed to embody the revelation of life and light. What actually happened at Bethany he would not care to distinguish from the meditative dream upon what happened, though S. John in his Ephesian sermons would be careful to do so.

One other consideration may be offered, which strikes different minds with unequal force. If a disciple wrote out his master's recollections, it would be exquisitely fit that he should describe his master in the story as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' Would it become S. John so to describe himself?

It might be also urged that the Gospel owes its philosophic colour to a writer trained in Alexandrine schools, and that the Galilean apostle could have had no such training. But this argument has not much weight. The philosophy is spontaneous in the thought: there is far less colour from the schools than in the epistle to the Hebrews where philosophic language abounds and where the temper is rather artistic than philosophic. And it is a question whether Hellenism is the main channel of the Johannine thought. Dr. Rendel Harris has shown that every phrase of the prologue can be found in the Wisdom books of the Jewish Bible. The 'Word' was indeed, in his view, a secondary designation of the Son; 'Wisdom' was the term which S. Paul and the earliest Christians preferred. Yet 'Word' too was derived from the same Jewish literature, and the whole development of the doctrine of the Trinity was shaped by the influence of Jewish, not Hellenic, language.¹ That is probably an exaggeration. If Judaism supplied the terminology, Hel-

¹ *The Origin of the Prologue to S. John's Gospel* (Cambridge, 1917), and *The Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Longmans, 1919).

lenic thought at least contributed to fill up the meaning. The Wisdom literature itself had been increasingly affected by Hellenic currents. It was largely due to interpenetration of the Hellenic or Hellenistic world that the fourth Gospel proved so fit to carry the Galilean and Pauline faith quite across its national boundaries and its first-century limitations. For it did do that. Paul opened a door of entry to the Gentiles, but this Gospel poured the Spirit of Christ into the wandering truth of the whole world, and still pours that Spirit abroad 'more widely than our interpretations allow.'

This progress was partly occasioned by the assaults of error, on the borders of the church and within it. The beginnings had been felt as early as S. Paul's captivity. The theology of Colossians, and therefore of Ephesians, sprang out of S. Paul's energy in checking a half-Jewish, half-pagan heresy of 'gnosis' in the Asian district. In the Letters of the Apocalypse corrupt doctrines more or less akin are rebuked. This 'gnosis' or 'knowledge' became the watchword of the later Gnostics. S. John avoids the noun but adopts the verb and the thought, turning it back to its proper purpose. To 'know God' is eternal life in his Gospel. So had it been for Hosea and Jeremiah. There is no 'intellectualism' in the Johannine doctrine: his 'knowing' is as pure and simple as S. Paul's 'faith.' But it is not enough to call either 'simple' and leave it so. The simplicity is the ultimate simplicity which issues from the clash of much thought. No intellectualism is here, but a great deal of intellect, and it is in its consecration of the reason that the Johannine Gospel has generally influenced the expanding ages and is likely to influence the new age just now opening upon us. We shall hardly find sufficient material to account for this rich, this 'modern' simplicity if we confine the Gospel to merely Jewish antecedents. The evangelist has drunk from new springs of life and gives back whence he has drawn.

All this may be more easily imagined of an Ephesian of the rising generation than of the aged S. John. However it could be imagined of S. John, and especially when we observe the freedom from pedantry with which it is achieved. Here is no book-learned man adapting the Gospel to the thought of his day. One who has learned from the still living Lord how the Gospel is swelling with a wider promise than has hitherto been conceived, searches for means to make this promise intelligible to all sorts and conditions of men. The air around him is permeated with certain ideas taught in Hellenic schools and caught up in streets and conversations. They are caught up roughly but essentially. They give the evangelist what he needs. In his prologue he acknowledges his debt, speaking of the 'Word' and 'life' and 'light' as men of ordinary education speak to-day of 'evolution' or the 'subliminal consciousness.' The neoplatonic terms are prettier than ours. Love of his Bible has bred a purer taste in language for him than is common among us. And he is too much in earnest to dwell long among his borrowed terms. As quickly as possible he begins the story which, in homeliest fashion, shall express these ideas.

In the story he concentrates all the ideas in a person. The ideas were great ones but not many, and in the person and work of Jesus Christ they attain a unity which more professedly philosophic authors must envy. It is some evidence for the comparatively early date of the Gospel; it shews more clearly still the keen single intention with which it is composed, that the only heresy against which this author ever speaks definitely is the heresy which in later days was called 'docetism,' the falsehood which reduced the Lord's manhood to 'appearance,' and made of him a divine being walking the earth in disguise. 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us': 'That which we have seen and have heard we declare to you also': 'Every spirit which confesseth Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh is of God': 'As he is we also are in this world': 'Behold

the man' (John i. 14, xix. 5; 1 John i. 3, iv. 2, 17). It is a very superficial reading of this Gospel which leaves the impression that the true manhood of the Lord is obscured therein. The out-of-doors freshness of the early Gospels could not indeed be repeated. To attempt a repetition would have been superfluous. Memory and experience had made the stream of event transparent to S. John. In the manhood he saw the Godhead clear; 'God only begotten revealing God' (i. 18). That is what he had to tell. But the revelation was not in the restricted person of the Lord Jesus alone. John perceived a like essential wonder in all life around the Lord; everywhere the divine within; everywhere the eternal breaking through appearance. This he indicates in the prologue. And he perceived how this was brought to be through the Lord's influence on the circle of his friends. The ties which bound him to his disciples in the synoptic Gospels are intensified in this Gospel. An ever inward burning love, such as men had not known before, sweeps away the dykes of vulgar personality, and makes him one with them. This is brought out partly by the simple homeliness of their relations; in the country wedding at Cana, in the washing of the feet at the last supper; reverence and affection surging into flood together: partly by the opposition of the Jews; the bitterness (to which again a superficial reader may give a querulous accent) shews the mortal issue of this strife, and it also lights up the unanimity of the Lord and his disciples. 'Let us go and die with him. . . . My Lord and my God,' said S. Thomas. That confession of faith follows naturally on the earlier devotion, and both spring from that Johanneine love which has been deepening into life and knowledge all through the story. So too the repeated sojourns in Jerusalem: part of their significance in the story is felt in the contrast with Galilee, which is always home. In the hostile city these country friends draw closer together. Very fitly does the Gospel close with the fishermen in Galilee again, talking naively, as it

were, with the risen Master and rejoicing in the glad promise of his now unconfined life.

The evangelist puts no 'as it were' into this last narrative: he would not spoil it by the banality. But 'they knew not that it was Jesus,' and presently 'None dared ask him, Who art thou? knowing it was the Lord.' There is a reticence and mystery over the whole scene which surely indicates how we should contemplate it. There is no discrepancy between its symbolic representation of the beginning of renewed intercourse in the 'mansion' of the Spirit and the language of the last discourse in the supper room. There the Lord spoke with more spiritual immediacy than ever before. Here the evangelist recurs to the custom of Jewish teachers who have always preferred to throw ineffable truths into story form. Just how far that may be practised throughout this Gospel is one of the problems of criticism. But we shall never enjoy it fully till we recognise that this gracious device, Platonic and Dantesque as well as Jewish, reasonable not fanciful, is to some extent employed. And to open minds that seek the quiet of truth even what remains of ambiguity presents no serious difficulty.

The Gospel opens with a prologue which sets the key of the whole. In the divine Word, the reason and creative expression of the unseen God, all that has being is life. In men this life is light by which they are capable of receiving supreme revelation. The facts of life as it actually goes on are indeed dark, but the light is victorious over darkness. The light never disappears, nor is any man without the light. This light is the subject of the history about to be told, which begins with the mission of John the Baptist. But he was not himself the light. He but bore witness to another who actually was, at the time of John's mission, coming into the world and was—what mystery of abstract and concrete, of personality as we now say—that light. This light was always in the world which he as Word had ordered, but the world knew him not.

The place and faith and nation which had been prepared for his manifestation knew him not when he came in kings and prophets nor when he came at last. Some however did receive him and to these he gave authority by spiritual birth to become children of God. In simplest manner, by the homely affections of common manhood, his disciples have now known him as a person, like themselves and yet supreme above all. The grace and truth, the ideal of holy manhood was his, and because he never fell short of the fulness of that ideal they recognised in him the one complete manifestation of the glory of God. In the sacrament of real manhood the real Godhead has been shewn; simply, profoundly, as in the relation of son to father, a relation which all can understand. John the Baptist led the way in this recognition. The disciples all shared it in due time, for what they perceived in him they partook of. For here was divine influence working in human intercourse, the kindly grace and truth of the Christ who is man's brother Jesus, no longer the external impersonal law of ancestral Jewish churchmanship. Under that law it was profitable to acquiesce in what is undoubtedly and unchangeably true, that no man has ever seen God; yet now that truth expands in light and life; here in this Master the one and only perfect friend, who ever rests in the bosom of the divine Father, who is himself divine, the invisible Godhead is revealed.

This prologue sets forth the idea of the history which is to follow, the idea of the sanctity of all life summed up in the incarnate Word from whom it proceeds, the idea of his ever self-imparting deity, the promise that in common scenes and ordinary events eternal grandeur will be continually manifest; and, with all this, the forewarning that the manifestation will be costly; in this dark world the light survives with difficulty; victory will be tragic, but there shall be victory.¹

¹ These two paragraphs are repeated with a few alterations from *The Johannine Writings* (Liverpool Diocesan Board of Divinity publications, No. xix.), Longmans, 1918. The passage on pp. 157 f. from *The Church Quarterly* was quoted in the preface to the same lectures.

These opening verses are generally entitled *The Prologue*. The term is apt for the whole Gospel is in the form of a drama. The action moves onward from the happy opening through apparent promise of success to the turning point in the feeding of the multitude and the discourse on the bread of life. Then the Jews begin to oppose, the outer circle of disciples to fall away. Galilee is left and the issue of the struggle takes place far from home in Jerusalem. It takes the semblance of a sacrifice with solemn words and priestly intercession. The priest surrenders himself as victim to his Father. Yet as all grows dark the light begins to shine with steadier power, and even before the tragic close the Lord makes his domination felt; and at last when victory is gained in what seems defeat, this victory is recognised as the goal to which all has been leading. Finally an epilogue is added. The scene is again in Galilee. The outlook is on the future, as though after a night of storm a new day had dawned.

The progress is accentuated by the signs or symbols in which the inner meaning of the outward course of events is revealed. The wedding feast at Cana is an incident in the kindly affection which binds together the Lord and the intimate group of Galilean friends and relations. That affection is to deepen into a love never before equalled which will be the centre whence the renewing of the union between the Father and all his children shall proceed. And here at Cana its future influence is anticipated as the gleam of the eternal breaks through the common law of things. In the healing of the nobleman's son, life (which the Word, life's author, came to make abundant) is saved. So far all is beautiful, just as it ought to be. But at the pool of Bethesda the unnatural evil of disease is encountered and overcome. Then the multitude is fed, and the discourse that follows strikes a warning note. Life, always life, is presented to our thought. Now it is the bread of life, but it is the broken bread, and the blood of the Saviour: there would be to a Greek ear

something harsh, almost fierce, in the challenge, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood.' Then sight is given to the blind man, and discourse again brings out the meaning. Life, it was declared in the prologue, rises in men to be light, the reason and the emotion which mediate knowledge of the divine, and this light the incarnate Word restores. Love, life, and light are gathered into one at the raising of Lazarus. 'I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me shall live though he die.' Reason, feeling, love, trust, transform vague hope for an external and future act of God into an immediate and indissoluble life in union with an adored Master. And so we pass, through a liturgy of sacrifice (with its preparatory anointing, its discourse, its priestly intercession) to the final sign of victory through death, this sign being rich in varied manifestation, cross, death, tomb, appearances of the risen Lord, commission to disciples, concentration of all the story in a creed (xx. 28-31) and the ultimate fulfilment even of knowledge (xvii. 3) in believing or trusting (xx. 31).

The signs, thus counted, are seven, a symbolic number. Other numbers of this kind have been observed in the Gospel and are quoted to corroborate its description as allegorical. That kind of symbolism is not the highest, and we may often doubt whether it is consciously devised. The closer art approaches truth the more it takes the proportions of natural life. These proportions always vary a little from the symmetry of artificial schemes, and there is generally a corresponding difficulty in getting number symbolism to run quite regularly. In the Apocalypse something of such a system is obvious.¹ In the Gospel it is rather the truth to nature of the writer's art which produces these coincidences. The whole drama is indeed symbolic, but symbolic in the higher sense. The sacramental principle sketched in Hebrews is balanced and rounded here. Through the whole of outward things the eternal

¹ Compare p. 152 above.

is revealed. As in looking upon water you may focus the eye upon the surface and ignore the depth, or you may look through the surface to the depth; so with the stream of life. The quality of this Gospel is that the stream becomes continuously pellucid. There are supreme moments when the eternal, so to say, breaks through; but it also is continually perceived in quiet light.

These supreme moments generally illustrate character. A notable one is at xiii. 31 where Judas goes out into the night for the irrevocable act of betrayal, and 'Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man glorified.' The dramatic power of the book is discerned in this also, that it illustrates character. The character of the Lord is central, but he draws forth the character of those with whom he acts and talks. He draws their real character from beneath the surface. They say and do greater things than they would have done by themselves. Think of John the Baptist, Nicodemus, S. Thomas, S. Peter. This vivid delineation of character has been noticed as a proof that the evangelist was an eyewitness. It may or may not prove that: at least it is a fact in the texture of this Gospel. What the evangelist would chiefly have us notice is this: through the revelation of his character what we compendiously style the deity of our Lord was apprehended by the first disciples and may still be apprehended by the reader. S. Thomas' 'My Lord and my God' follows long affectionate intercourse in which the Lord's character had gradually become clear and in which he had realised that his own and his companions' character had been educed accordingly. In Hebrews the sinless, though tempted manhood of the Lord was the main symbol in the sacrament of his person. In this Gospel the manhood is still the visible symbol, but it has a larger surface and reveals a profounder depth.

Let this also be plain before we leave this part of our subject. The Godhead revealed in the sacramental narrative really corresponds to the manhood.

The symbol is no allegory ; it is a proper symbol and partakes of the reality it symbolises. Therefore, as the manhood is real manhood by virtue of its influential, diffusive, comprehensive force of character ; so is the Godhead. No book of the New Testament insists on this so strongly. 'The Christ' to the Jewish Church had always been representative and inclusive. S. Paul, with his 'In Christ,' and his 'Christ who is all in all being fulfilled,' had enlarged the original Jewish idea. But S. John goes further with his promise from the Lord, 'He that believeth on me, the works which I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father' (xiv. 12), and with the Lord's sacerdotal prayer in xvii., 'And I too, the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one.' It is commonly held that one passage in the synoptic Gospels (Matt. xi. 25 ff., Luke x. 21 ff.) binds their doctrine with S. John's, because our Lord therein makes as majestic a claim to deity as he ever does in S. John's Gospel. That is true, but it is to a unity with the Father which men may share : so always in S. John, so also here, if the interpretation proposed by Dr. Burkitt be allowed.¹ The disciples have returned from their mission. There had been disappointment in the Lord's ministry ; now there comes a success. Each and all turns of fortune, says the Lord, are delivered to me from my Father and I the Son accept his will with gladness. So is it always in true fatherhood and sonship. So is it now and always not only for me but for all who through me learn to know the Father of all. The Greek verb which represents 'are delivered' (cf. Matt. xxviii. 18, though the forms are not quite the same) is not perhaps what might have been expected if this be the sense of the whole. But our Lord spoke Aramaic ; the Greek is but translation ; and the interpretation is not only harmonious with the rest of the Galilean

¹ *Journal of Theological Studies*, January 1911.

Gospel, but is especially harmonious with the Johannine. The Johannine Gospel is conspicuous for the august claim to unity in the Godhead made therein by our Lord ; no less remarkable is the inclusive character of that claim. From this Gospel rather than from any of the others S. Athanasius and the Greek fathers might justify their bold assertion that the Word became flesh that men might become divine.

When once this truth has been observed in a few striking passages the whole Gospel according to S. John is perceived by the reader to be instinct with it. And the older criticism of the Gospel is therefore liable to modification. It was these claims of deity that seemed to the earlier critics out of consonance with our Lord's own preaching and with the mind of the first-century church. Therefore prejudice was engendered for a second-century date and a frank confession of its unhistorical character. But the claim, as we may now understand it, is highly primitive in tone whether we compare it with the Galilean preaching or with the apostolic theology. In a second-century Gospel it must have almost certainly lost its breadth and depth. For indeed the true Johannine claim is larger, more full of divine promise than any more precise form that human reverence has imposed upon it since.

These remarks on the narrative and plan of the Gospel may be summed up in the following sketch :

I. PROLOGUE : THE DRAMA OPENS (i.—ii. 11).

The Word made flesh ; the herald : the Lamb of God : the true Messiah : the Lord of love among his friends (Cana in Galilee, first sign).

II. THE MORNING OF LIFE (ii. 12—iv.).

Galilee and Jerusalem : first passover : true baptism and spiritual regeneration (Nicodemus) : the waning of the Baptist : the water of life (Samaria) : the saving of life (nobleman's son, second sign).

III. CLOUDS AT NOON (v.—vi.).

Disease and healing (pool at Bethesda, third sign): the true eucharist and the broken bread of life (the five thousand, fourth sign): turning point; the hard way chosen: Jews begin to oppose, disciples to fall away; the Twelve are drawn closer. Farewell to Galilee: second passover.

IV. GATHERING STORM (vii.—xii.).

Two feasts in Jerusalem: discussions and increasing opposition: the Light of the world (sight to the blind, fifth sign): the Good Shepherd: the Resurrection and the Life (Lazarus, sixth sign).

Preparation for liturgy of sacrifice (Mary; the multitude; the Greeks).

V. DARKNESS AND LIGHT (xiii.—xx.).

Love perfected in humility: the discourse which interprets the prologue: the true ascension, advent, and communion of saints: the Comforter who is the Spirit of truth: knowing and believing.

The priestly intercession: the response of the cruel world: the completed sacrifice.

The seventh sign in varied manifestations of victorious life: apostolate and creed (as the Father hath sent me. . . . My Lord and my God): trust perfected in love.

VI. EPILOGUE: THE NEW DAY (xxi.).

Galilee again: again the Lord of love among his friends.

A few paragraphs must now be given to the view presented in this Gospel of the advent hope.¹ Not

¹ Dr. A. E. Brooke has written upon this in his commentary on *The Epistles of St. John* in the International Critical Commentaries (T. & T. Clark, 1912): see especially pp. xxi, 51, 82f. Other commentaries

very much need be added to what has already been said on p. 165. The stripping away of traditional apocalyptic scenery, already carried far by S. Paul, is quietly completed by S. John. True, there are places in the Gospel where the old language seems recrudescient. But most, if not all of these may be relieved of inconsistency if studied with attention, and with that docility which the work of a profound thinker always demands: for with a profound thinker we must expect more than we can fathom at a first attempt; and we should be slow to credit him with carelessness or inconsistency; slow too to explain superficial discrepancies by postulating composite workmanship or editorial redactions.¹ A typical instance may be seen in v. 24-29. 'Verily, verily,' the Lord begins, as often when the peculiar doctrine of this Gospel is to be declared. That doctrine immediately follows: 'He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgement, but hath passed out of death into life.' But the 'Verily,

on the Epistles are Westcott's (Macmillan, 1883) with a valuable essay on 'The Church and the World' as well as other essays; and F. D. Maurice's, who has also left an expository commentary on the Gospel, both published by Macmillan. Maurice in his generation led the way to a better understanding of S. John, dissolving mists of convention. He did this so well that much of what he wrote seems almost a commonplace to us now, and his thoughts come to us more freshly in the letters and conversations which his son has preserved in *The Life of Frederick Denison Maurice* (Macmillan, 1884), which should be read by every student of the New Testament. But this qualification need hardly be made for his notes on the first epistle in which he found inspiration for so much of his social teaching. The heart of Maurice's teaching from Holy Scripture may be found in a book of selections made by Mr. Llewelyn Davies and called *Lessons of Hope* (Macmillan, 1889): a good interpretation of his teaching in terms of to-day was made by Archdeacon Cunningham, just before he died, in a small book called *The Secret of Progress* (Cambridge University Press, 1919).

¹ Compare Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* xii., 'In the perusal of philosophical works I have been greatly benefited by a resolve; which in the antithetical form and with the allowed quaintness of an adage or maxim, I have been accustomed to word thus: *until you understand a writer's ignorance presume yourself ignorant of his understanding.*'

verily' is then repeated, introducing the doctrine in somewhat modified terms: 'The hour cometh and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so also to the Son he gave to have life in himself. And he gave him authority to do judgement, because he is the Son of man.' This gets full significance from the former sentence, but by itself is but a variant of the synoptic proclamation, 'The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the good news,' together with the synoptic confession of S. Peter that the Lord Jesus is the Christ of the kingdom. Hence it easily leads into the concession to those who cling to the old picture language, 'Marvel not at this, for the hour doth come in which all who are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth, those who have done good to resurrection of life, those who have done evil to resurrection of judgement.' Here, as in the synoptic Gospels, our Lord will not force the new wine into the old bottles, and recognises that those who in sincerity find 'the old is better' may thus receive the same truth as the Greeks and moderns: only, there must be sincerity alike in old and new seekers, and alike they must be ready to 'hate their life in this world' and so to 'keep it unto life eternal'; compare xii. 20-26, and consider how the likeness, with difference, of each passage to the synoptic sayings illustrates the real derivation of the Johannine doctrine from the Galilean, together with the freedom in expression which the later evangelist allows himself.

'Life eternal,' not 'everlasting life': that accuracy in translation is necessary. As far as may be, in S. John as in the ancient liturgies,¹ these great truths are

¹ See Hammond, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, Introd., p. xxxvii (Oxford University Press, 1878), and compare Plato, *Timaeus* 37 D, E; Time with its parts is an eternal image of the eternity which has no parts or tenses. So also Philo, *quis rerum div.* p. 496, *de mut. nom.* p. 619.

presented 'timelessly.' All is an 'eternal now.' But great truths are for practice not for dreaming, and the Lord's Platonism in this Gospel—as in Socrates' own Platonism, which was the type of our Lord's fulfilment—is a ground for action in time, in the succession of duties in common life. There is a parallel in S. Paul's doctrine of justification. God accounts the sinner righteous, and then gives him grace to work out righteousness: God has given all freely, therefore 'Brethren, we are debtors.' In John v. 24 a phrase reminds us of the epistle (1 John iii. 14): 'We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.' The epistle (whether written before or after the Gospel) is the application of the Gospel doctrine to the practice of churchmanship. The timeless passing out of death into life is the source of charitable effort¹ (which in the Ephesian church might involve martyrdom, 1 John iii. 16): in wise and fearless exercise of charity the eternal source of active life is proved by drawing from it.

So too in S. John's conception of the advent. He no longer looks for a 'coming' of 'the Christ' as in a future day, as from another world. 'The Christ' is not the title that adequately expresses his enlarging faith and love: he tries to express more, and more exactly, by 'Son of God' and 'Son of man,' or by 'The Word.' It is to him a little matter if S. Peter's confession were anticipated by Nathanael or by the woman of Samaria: not the occasion of such confession but the fuller meaning of it is what he cares about. That need shewn, and as far as may be satisfied, he resumes the venerable title (xx. 31): no more than his Master does he desire to abolish the old wine which still is good and some say better.

And instead of a 'coming' he thinks of a 'manifestation' of one who is always 'here': but it is a spaceless 'here' as it is a timeless 'now,' we are with him

¹ Compare 1 John iv. 19, 'We love, because he first loved us,' where the late text 'We love him' spoils the sense.

in the spiritually measured 'Father's house.' Dr. Brooke thinks the epistle shows that at the last S. John returned to a simpler expectation of the advent. Is it not more true to think that he found he could contain all his deep idea in words so simple that the old-fashioned Christians and the new might both accept them? At least in 1 John iii. 1-3 his utmost range seems reached; we shall see the Lord, he writes, 'as he is.' And again in this passage the proving of the philosophic conception in the practical relationship of actual 'here' and 'now' is inculcated: 'Beloved, now are we children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself even as he is pure.' Again and again S. John endorses the saying of Tolstoy, that the life of Jesus is the metaphysic of the Christ.

And we need to remind ourselves continually that S. John, or his evangelist, or both, mean us to refer this doctrine, this philosophy, to the Lord Jesus as its ultimate source. It is most fully and essentially set forth in the discourse of the last supper with the high-priestly prayer which completes the discourse (John xiii.-xvii.). The critical theory we have adopted of the composition of the Gospel and many observations of detail which we have made by the way encourage us to give historical value of a somewhat different kind to the doctrine than we can give to the events. Both have probably been shaped with some freedom by the evangelist. But freedom in recounting events must impair tradition: doctrine may be blended with interpretation without violation of the original.

Let us now look at the discourse. It is the evening before the passover evening. The Lord has with his disciples partaken of a solemn meal which is to be instead of the passover (Luke xxii. 15). Their minds are heavy with foreboding: the Lord will calm and comfort them. He makes them feel more than ever

the love which has always united them and him (xiii. 1). He consecrates it by washing their feet, and bids them ever live in love as his disciples. Troubled in spirit, he makes three attempts to save Judas; first throwing the accusation into the midst of all, then dipping with Judas in the dish, the act of special intimacy, then bidding him 'What thou doest, do quickly.' But Judas, confessing not, repenting not, goes out into the night (xiii. 30).

From this point all is on a more inward stage; 'Now is the Son of man glorified and God is glorified in him.' The Lord says plainly that he is going. But he calls the disciples his little children as he says it and again appeals to their love.¹ Peter, ready to devote his life, is warned of the denial which will delay his following; yet he shall follow later.

Then begins (xiv.) the sublime theology of consolation. It is to the Father that the Lord goes. The whole movement is still within the Father's house of universal life.² In that house are many mansions or abiding places—'spheres' as we sometimes say in our more vulgar style. The disciples have been with their Lord in the mansion of Galilee and Jerusalem: now they will be with him still in another mansion which will presently be explained (see verse 15 ff.); it will be the mansion of the Spirit. Hitherto they have been together in the mansion of the senses. The disciples

¹ Would it not make better sense and be more consonant with all that follows, if the full stop usually placed at the end of verse 33 were taken away?—'Ye shall seek me, and as I said to the Jews, Where I go ye cannot come; so to you do I say now, A new commandment I give to you that ye love one another . . .?' That commandment kept the disciples can come where the Lord goes.

² Dr. J. O. F. Murray has pointed out a possible comparison with Luke ii. 49, where *ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς μου* might be translated 'in my Father's house,' and the point would be that wherever the child was he was still at home with the Father. If so, was it not an appeal to his mother's teaching, and a far-reaching link between the Galilean Gospel at its very source and the Johannine? Of course the link might be meditative rather than historical; but compare also the apocalyptic anticipation in the *Magnificat*, p. 38.

have heard the Master's voice, seen his face, touched him, and followed his footsteps: compare the word of the risen Lord to Mary Magdalene (xx. 17), 'Touch me not for I am not yet ascended to the Father.' That is finished now. No fancied renewal of such nearness, for those disciples or for us, may alleviate the parting of death: as far as the senses go it is a real parting. But in the mansion of the Spirit the Lord will bring his disciples into closer communion than the senses can afford, 'that where I am ye may be also.'

And he adds, 'where I go ye know the way.' That evokes S. Thomas' question which is answered, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' Since Dr. Hort's Hulsean Lectures¹ we can never again weaken this into 'I lead the way, show the truth, create the life.' Wherever in the maze of public history or of the careers of men severally the 'way' is discerned through which events have moved or men have been called to advance; wherever truth appears in old religions or new science; wherever life puts forth its energy in nature mind affection enterprise; he whom we adore as Lord is that way truth life. In all history knowledge energy there are innumerable evolutions and conversions to the Father, and all are he: 'No one cometh to the Father but by me.' This is like what the Lord had said to Martha at Bethany: 'I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me though he die shall live, and every one that liveth and believeth on me shall, for eternity, not die' (xi. 25 f.). And taken together with this fourteenth chapter, that teaches us to believe that what the Lord promised to his first disciples avails for all disciples; that still death is a step in the movement from the mansion of the senses to the mansion of the Spirit; that here and now we may live with the Lord in that life which is life indeed; and if with him, then with all who are where he is. It creates faith not merely in the resurrection of the dead—the mystery of that distant

¹ See above, p. 167.

morrow is not yet unveiled; but in the communion of saints—that is experience which may be enjoyed without symbol and without delay.

No doubt the experience ebbs and flows. It ebbs when we fall back upon the senses and regret the vanished face or insist upon a fancied presence on this side or on that, instead of desiring 'that he may dwell in us and we in him.' It ebbs when we live (in S. Paul's phrase) after the flesh and fall beneath the Christian standard. It flows when we rise so high in act or thought or worship as to forget self and live *non sibi sed toti*, not for self but for the whole. And doubtless the complete achievement of such selflessness is impossible without him who is the way: 'No one cometh unto the Father but by me.' And at this last supper the Lord set an example which awes us as we let its full meaning sink into our hearts. In the prologue the evangelist begins with The Word who is with God, is God, in whom is life, who is the light which life rises to become. Gradually the attributes of what we understand by a 'person' gather round this deity and mould a man among men, an actor in the course of history. Now saying farewell, 'going' that he may 'come,' this person strips himself of the distinctions and separateness which mortals cling to, and for this transfiguration S. John can find no words except such abstractions as he has used in the prologue: 'I am the way, the truth, the life; I am the resurrection and the life.' This is indeed losing *psyche*, soul or self, to find it.

And yet again, notice the homeliness (to repeat a word without which it is impossible to talk long about this Gospel); notice the homeliness of the terms now used, 'way truth life.' Presently (xiv. 16) the Spirit will be introduced into the discourse, which will (as we have here anticipated) help to explain the first part of the consolation. The Spirit is called 'another Paraclete.' The term recurs in the epistle (1 John ii. 1). There it seems to mean an 'advocate,' one who stands up for an accused person. But the legal meta-

phor hardly bears pressing. A helpful friend, a friend in need,¹ is the main idea, and it is a homely affectionate idea. Our familiar translation 'Comforter' is very good. And so the discourse continues, very simply, very rich in our common humanity. The sacramental principle ousts philosophy again. The last words in the chamber are words of Galilean love. For all the effulgence of the eternal Word it is still through Jesus—*Ecce homo*—that the Word is revealed.

So is it when they are out of doors conversing by the way. Only now the simplest words about friendship, persecution and support, the guidance of the Comforter, the 'little while and ye shall not see me,' which is the same little while and they shall see him; all have a more intelligible as they have a grander meaning. The disciples indeed are lulled by the easiness of the talk and it all but ends with pathetic warning: all but, for the very end is 'These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'

Then the conversation ceased. The Saviour turned to his Father, free for his own language of prayer. He intercedes, always drawing his disciples by that means into the mansion of the Spirit. He asks for consecration, divine union life eternal. 'And this,' he says, 'is life eternal that they should know thee the only true God and him whom thou didst send Jesus Christ' (xvii. 3). There would be little profit in amplifying what has been said above (pp. 165 f.) about this 'knowing God' of the Johannine Gospel. Thomas Erskine of Linlathen once met a shepherd in the Highlands to whom he put the unlooked-for question, Do you know the Father?² Compare that question with Are you

¹ Compare Dr. Johnson in Boswell's *Life* (April 24, 1776), 'What is a friend? One who supports you and comforts you, while others do not.'

² See *Erskine of Linlathen, selections and biography*, by Henry F. Henderson, p. 122 (Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1899).

saved? and you feel S. John. But it is worth remark that the Greek verb in the verse just quoted does not mean 'know immediately by intuition' but 'come to know,' 'know by learning.' Quite in accord with this is the conclusion of the anecdote about Erskine. 'The shepherd, taken aback, said nothing; but meeting Mr. Erskine many years afterwards and recognising him, he said, "I know the Father now."' This knowledge is true mysticism which strives to inward clearness, and is ill content with mistiness.¹ Insistence upon the niceties of tense and choice of synonyms in New Testament Greek is indeed regarded with suspicion by many scholars now, but this nicety may be excused here for it fits in with the Johannine rule of working out philosophy in practice. It is also comfortable to plain men who are conscious of no mystical illumination and yet are sure that they are strengthened by S. John's Gospel.

A few pages back we spoke of worship and alluded to phrases in the eucharistic service.² We might have completed the allusion by quoting the liturgic preface: 'Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven . . .' The evangelist would not have quoted, but so ancient is the hymn we may fancy him recognising it. Behind his Gospel lies a settled church life in which the sacraments of baptism and holy eucharist are an all-important part. He does not speak of the institution of these sacraments: that had already been recorded. But he gives two discourses of the Lord which declare their meaning; for baptism the conversation with Nicodemus (iii.), for the eucharist the sermon on the bread of life (vi.). When the Gospel is read through with this sacramental background in mind the frequency of allusion will be felt, and once felt it will leave no room for doubt that the two

¹ Compare Burnet, *Greek Philosophy from Thales to Plato* (Macmillan, 1914), pp. 167 f.: ' . . . I suspect that all true mysticism is of this nature, and that to set feeling above reason as a means of knowing is only a perversion of it.' Cf. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, cxxiii.

² See p. 153.

passages in iii. and vi. really do treat of these two sacraments. This has been disputed because the treatment so far departs from the somewhat narrow forms in which we conventionally teach. We may suspect that S. John departed in his Ephesian teaching from the convention of his day. Impressions may deceive, but the impression is left upon the reader that this Gospel corrects a reverence for sacraments which was becoming too materialised. In Acts and S. Paul the holy eucharist appears as a bond of communion among the faithful and a shewing forth of the Lord's death until he should come (Acts ii. 42, 46; 1 Cor. x. 16 f., xi. 23 ff.). These two aspects had been stressed by the Lord at the institution, but he had also said, 'This is my body, my blood,' and S. Paul had written of the awful sacredness of this divine food. In the second century the sacrament was mainly regarded as the food of immortality, and the Lord's presence therein filled the heart of the worshippers rather than his advent.¹

¹ See Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of S. Paul*, pp. 45, 201 ff., 433 ff. Perhaps Professor Lake separates too sharply. The early act of worship was one whole: theories about it were differentiated afterwards. There was also from the first an act of offering, hardly a theory about what was offered. Dr. Anderson Scott writes: 'The Church itself was the subject of a sacrificial offering to God. It is the proud consciousness of being the agent in such an offering, and in that sense a "sacrificing priest," which rings through Paul's words in Romans xv. 16. He acts as a priest for the Gentiles when he leads them in the act of worship which consists in the offering up of themselves, of the sacred Body of Christ, which has been "consecrated by the Holy Spirit." It is to this conception that we are to trace all the allusions to "sacrifice" in connexion with the Eucharist down to the end of the second century' (*What happened at Pentecost*, in a collection of essays entitled *The Spirit*, and edited by B. H. Streeter; Macmillan, 1919).

I doubt whether S. Paul means to allude to the eucharist in Rom. xv. 16, nor do I feel sure that the early eucharistic allusions to sacrifice are all due to one conception of the offering: some may depend rather upon the idea which distinguishes Hebrews. That the faithful are themselves the body of Christ in the eucharist was certainly part of the ancient faith. See S. Augustine, *Tract. in Ev. Joh.* xxvi., and compare Mason, *The faith of the Gospel* (Rivingtons, 1889), pp. 318 f.: 'However little this thought is insisted upon at the present day, it is enshrined in S. Paul's words to the Corinthians, and forms a large element in the teaching of the Fathers.'

If this twofold shifting of emphasis had begun in S. John's time it would throw light on much in the Gospel. Food indeed but spiritual food; and therefore, and only so, true nourishment, is the theme of chapter vi. Present with us now, not merely expected in a distant advent is one of the themes in the discourse of the last supper. So too with the life-giving water and the new birth in baptism. These, the Lord teaches in S. John, are most real; only they cease to be real when materially conceived. The new birth is the same as entrance into the kingdom: there is a false antithesis if we separate it from repentance or conversion. And the water is indeed of life, but it springs and wells up within; it acts not from without upon a man (iv. 14).

Most of this teaching in the Gospel is from the Lord's own lips. The turn it takes may help us to understand at least part of the principle governing the modification of the Lord's actual words in this Gospel. The Lord's words were the text of S. John's sermons in the Ephesian church. The form given to his words follows the intention of the sermon. S. Mark had composed S. Peter's 'catechisings' (cf. Luke i. 4, original Greek) into his Gospel. The Ephesian pupil made his Gospel from the more doctrinal sermons of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Organised church life lies behind the three epistles also of S. John. 'Settled' was perhaps an ambiguous adjective to use above: when has vigorous church life ever been settled? The second and still more the third epistle indicate some disturbances. In the second 'the elect lady' addressed with so much affection is warned against those who are 'advanced' in theology (9) and do not 'abide' in that true tradition which the forward guiding Spirit (John xvi. 13) will never supersede (John xiv. 26). In the third the disagreeable ambition of one Diotrephes is sharply threatened. These two epistles seem to be pastorals sent to leading members of outlying congregations in S. John's diocese, or (as he preferred to call it) presbyterate.

It seems that the second and third epistles were not read as canonical in all the congregations of the early church.¹ Their brevity and the limited scope of their subject may account for that. No doubt was felt about the first epistle, and we who are not here engaged upon minute criticism may be content to accept all three as S. John's. The close agreement in Greek style with the Gospel obliges us to suppose (what is in itself so likely) that the same pupil who composed the Gospel was the secretary who wrote the letters—the thoughts S. John's, the words the younger man's. The agreement is not quite absolute, but that should not be expected between a Gospel and a letter. If that explanation suffices not, we may imagine an Ephesian style which, like a handwriting, was learned by many school companions without destroying personal character.

The first epistle applies the Gospel to daily life. It may be that the Gospel was written after the death of S. John. Then the Gospel preaching, not the Gospel book provides the application. On the whole that seems to fit best with what we observe. The opening verses of the epistle are more like a first sketch than a later summary of the Gospel prologue. These verses are closer to the Galilean memory of the beloved disciple. His heart rejoiced in the Lord Jesus whom he knew as the incarnate Word: and so, in this epistle, he insists directly on that very manhood of the Saviour, which in the Gospel he illustrates by the progress of narrative.

From the incarnation he passes to the Christian fellowship which is the extending of the incarnation. He will not use the word 'church.' As with the sacrament in the Gospel, so here he would purify convention. 'The church' was the cry of the day: he will pour the Spirit into what tends to lose vitality in organisation.

First, the faithful must not sin. He starts on this

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 25.

theme in the first chapter and returns to it in the last. They have received authority to become children of God and 'whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not'; the Lord Jesus 'who was begotten of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not' (v. 18; cf. iii. 9). We 'know' this, he says. It is part of the primitive tradition. In a later age Tertullian and others hardened this into a dogma, No second repentance after baptism.¹ There is nothing like that in the New Testament, but it is evident that the discrepancy between principle and practice was causing difficulty at the close of the first century. This was natural. When our Lord proclaimed the kingdom those who would enter entered by repentance, by conversion. The kingdom was at hand: there was, it might seem, no time for backsliding. When S. Paul preached to the Gentiles, he preached out of the experience of his own conversion, and the 'little flocks' he gathered in city after city lived with the enthusiasm of converted men among an antagonistic populace. There were backslidings in Paul's churches. He dealt with the several cases without laying out a penitential system. He still addressed the congregations as 'saints,' and still upheld the ideal of holiness. In Hebrews the sinless Lord stands out above all other men in their temptations, but the tone of the whole epistle forbids our supposing that the author would acquiesce in our modern contentment with a lower standard than the standard of our Lord. But in S. John's days that lower standard was gaining acceptance. Some said they had no sin (i. 8), anticipating the later distinction between venial and mortal sins. Some said it was

¹ Dr. Windisch argues that the original doctrine of the New Testament was as rigorous, and that it was taken over from Ezekiel and the Old Testament. In S. Paul it is still the rule: 2 Cor. vii. 10 is rather strangely quoted in support. So too in Hebrews (vi. 4 ff.). In S. John's epistle the primitive rule is relaxed: *Der Hebräerbrief*, pp. 50 ff.

The excursus is learned and careful. It provides the reader with material to form his own judgement, but a broad view of the material will hardly make for agreement with Dr. Windisch.

impossible not to sin (v. 18). The fires of conversion had died down. There were already some hereditary Christians. The church was established and this dulness in the pursuit of innocence was involved in the developement.

S. John upholds the ideal yet allows no extenuation of the sins which do go on. When any of the faithful sin they thereby fall out of the fellowship of the family of God. But they must not remain in that separated state. They must acknowledge their sins and God will restore them. Whatever they do he remains faithful to his fatherhood: it is they who separate themselves not he who casts them off (i. 8 ff.). And sin need not be repeated. Means are appointed for complete if gradual cleansing from all sin: 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us continuously from all sin' (i. 7). Notice the generic singular 'all sin' (as in John i. 29, altered to plural in *Gloria in excelsis*); notice also the tense of the verb 'cleanseth' in which Westcott justly recognises the force of gradual completion. Notice also the connexion of Christian fellowship with forgiveness. The faith and ideal of all avails all mutually. It may be that the word 'confess' or 'acknowledge' in verse 9 includes confession to one another. Comparing James v. 16 f., we may be sure it does, that is if we include but do not restrict: no disciplinary system is dominant as yet. So again 'the blood of Jesus' may include a reference to the eucharist, but cannot be restricted thereto.

A like breadth must be allowed in the interpretation of v. 16 f. There is a sin—or better without the article, sin—unto death. Concerning that S. John will not command his brethren to pray. He does not say he will ever refrain himself from praying for every brother who sins at all. We think of our Lord's words in Mark iii. 28 ff., already hardened from his large meaning in Luke and Matthew.¹ We think of

¹ Cf. pp. 15 f.

Heb. vi. 4 ff., and of the Corinthian whom S. Paul determined to deliver to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord (1 Cor. v. 5). In venturing to explain S. John it may be well to go no farther than this: he would have his brothers intercede with sincerity. There may be cases in which a heart is so evidently estranged that some at any rate could no longer pray without insincerity for a miracle of renewal. That S. John believed there was a particular form of sin which could never be forgiven is not to be thought possible. Read in its obvious sense iii. 19 ff., the tenderest yet firmest counsel ever offered to a troubled conscience: 'In this shall we know that we are of the truth and shall persuade our heart before him that if our heart condemn us, still God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.'

'In this': in what? The two preceding verses explain. 'Herein we know love, in that he laid down his life for us: and we owe now the debt to lay down lives for the brothers. Whosoever hath the livelihood of the world and looks upon his brother when he is in need, and shuts up his compassions from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word nor yet in tongue but in deed and truth.' Forgiveness, renewal, a good conscience, all are bound up with active love of the brethren. The ideal of Christian holiness is not scrupulous abstinence from doing wrong things: it is an energy in creating good. The truly theological question is not academic, Can a man avoid committance of any sin, small or great? but practical, Will a man aim at absolute goodness which is divine love? For 'God is love' (iv. 16) not negatively innocence.

Accordingly the greater part of this epistle is taken up with an exposition of love as the true churchmanship. This love springs from its source in Godhead: 'We love because he first loved us' (iv. 19); in calling us his children the Father gave us the gift of loving

(iii. 1). By the incarnation of the Word this love was implanted in a fellowship of men where it can fructify (i. 3). The test of orthodoxy and the assurance of conscience is in love of the brethren (ii. 9 f., iii. 14 ff.). It unveils the mystery of the advent and the consummation of the divine will (iii. 1 ff., iv. 17 f.). It is no dream but a very plain and practical ordering of life (iii. 17 f.). Yet commonplace as its exercise may seem there is no limit to its heroism, for the example of the Christian lover is the Son of God who died for him, and who gives him sufficiency for every trial of love by making his heart pure (iii. 16, iv. 9 ff.).

Here too we may conjecture circumstances which rendered this counsel opportune. It is when the church becomes established that it needs direction about its charities. In the early days of conversion the church is a little band of saints gathering close together against the unkind world. All are known to one another. They are united in a common cause. They are really and truly brothers. The sick, the poor cannot be overlooked: their relief is a sweet relaxation in the strain of peril, a natural fruit of 'the first love' (Apoc. ii. 4; and compare Acts ii. 44 ff., iv. 32 ff.). But this first love wears off as numbers increase and group themselves in classes and brothers no longer know each other intimately; they become 'the brethren' instead of being each to each a brother; churchmanship is tested by creed and not by love. Thus some, remembering the poverty of Christ and the unworldliness of his precepts, desert the fellowship of creed and sacrament. Others give alms or subscribe to charities, not of pure love but to gain merit, or at best to perform duty. And some—so at least the epistle seems to indicate—talk of love but let the poor suffer. For remedy of such a state of things this theology of charity, this treatise on Christian socialism, was composed.

And S. John might well pitch the note deep. For if the risk is great in an established church grown

lukewarm, its opportunity may be still more greatly used. The early church of conversion, the apocalyptic gospel of Galilee, does indeed unite its members in bonds of love. But it also tends to set hope in another world, to leave the general evil of this world alone, even to be satisfied with the peace that passeth understanding for the elect while the mass of the unpredestinated perish. But as the heat and zeal die down a steadier love that reaches even beyond the brethren may grow up instead. And this is tended and directed by S. John. The two strains, the salvation of the elect and the taking away of the sin of the world, are never separated in the New Testament. But they do vary their intensity in the different writers. It might cautiously be said that there is more of the first in S. Paul: certainly the second is to be felt in a new and special manner in S. John. On a first reading his epistle seems to close with terrible sternness, as on a hasty reading our Lord seems in the Gospel to argue harshly with the Jews; 'We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one.' But read the book through, if possible read it through aloud, and let the whole have its effect. Thus it will be clear that here too the theme of love is kept, is indeed brought to its height and breadth. For all that S. John saw his church established he had seen persecution too, and more persecution was to follow. And still the most part of Ephesus was heathen, and 'the whole world lieth in the evil one' was a statement of fact: 'we know that we are of God' was the appeal to Christian love. By that love, organised in a fellowship of children of God, the world must be rescued from the evil one. S. John says what no earlier evangelist had said explicitly, that Jesus Christ is a propitiation for the whole world (ii. 2).

V

CONCLUSION AND RETROSPECT : RENASCENCE OF SPIRIT THROUGH LETTER

THREE books have still to be looked at, the epistles of S. James and S. Jude and the second epistle of S. Peter. The epistle of S. James opens thus :

‘James, servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are in dispersion, greeting.’

The writer then exhorts to gladness in trials or temptations which are a proving of faith, yet come not from God but from the enticing desires of men. Wisdom is the antidote, and it is to be asked from God sincerely ; wisdom which is Word or reason implanted in man, and is a practical influence working after the perfect law of freedom. He ends this first division of the epistle with the beautiful definition of ‘true religion.’

The second division begins with chapter ii. and continues to iv. 12. The Christian discipline is here described. It follows the royal law of courtesy which is love, and which being broken, the whole law is broken. Nor can faith be faith without such loving works.

Words too matter as much as deeds. The tongue can work more bitterly than aught else ; clean contrary to Wisdom.

Bitterness, strife indeed ; greed and contradiction : who are we that we should judge our neighbour ? A short section (iv. 13-v. 6) echoes this : Who are we

with our brief life? Ah! the short-sighted tyranny of mortals. This leads to

The conclusion (v. 7-20). The day of the Lord comes surely. Wait for it as becomes the people of the Lord to wait. Restrain speech and swear not at all. Nor repine; but help one another by mutual prayer and faith, recovering any brother who falls from truth or righteousness.

It is commonly supposed that the James who writes this is James the brother of the Lord and ruler of the church in Jerusalem. And the predominance of moral precept over doctrine is thought to indicate a very early date. It may be so. Yet there is no clear mark of date in the epistle nor any claim of official distinction for the writer: he might be any one named James who was a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. The twelve tribes of the dispersion are doubtless, as in 1 Peter, the Christian heirs of the Jewish church. 'Synagogue' in ii. 2 may be a general word for assembly (as it is rendered in A.V.). And if high doctrine is not to be expected in an early writing, more memory and mention of the Lord Jesus might be expected than appears here, whether of the ministry in Galilee, or of the cross and resurrection, or of the advent.

Perhaps the infrequent repetition of the Lord's name may be explained otherwise. Does not the whole piece read less like a letter than a sermon, and less like a sermon than notes for a series of sermons? In the sketch given above rather plainer connexion between the paragraphs has been suggested than is obvious. They succeed one another like notes, and in the shorthand of notes the name might be unwritten though the person was in mind. But if we have a sermon here on the ethics of the Christian fellowship, in which doctrine is taken for granted, a late date would be more probable than an early. There are affinities with the sermon on the mount, yet not with the whole of it but with those parts which have themselves affinity with the Wisdom books of the Jewish church. Quite as marked are the

resemblances to that homily of the second or late first century which goes by the name of the second epistle of Clement. It is hardly reasonable to say that in the passage about faith and works James could not have contradicted Paul but Paul might have corrected James. More naturally we might see there a later correction of Paulinism misunderstood, as perhaps in 2 Tim. ii. 18 or 2 Pet. iii. 15 f.

It is at least attractive to imagine some bishop or presbyter of the later though still apostolic church leaving in this brief document some notes for a course of homilies; jotting down his thoughts as the needs of his people suggest them one after another; in good easy Greek; with sympathy generosity and old-fashioned sobriety; now and then writing out in full a good phrase which happily expressed his thought. Yet this is imagination. We have not enough material within the epistle nor evidence outside it to settle the date. Perhaps it is an example of the very noble piety of the later church, masculine ardent quiet self-effacing, a 'tractarian' type. Perhaps we have a glimpse of a certain temper, the 'wise' rather than the 'saving' temper, which existed in the earliest church, as it still exists; varying, yet harmoniously, the more strenuous temper of Paul or Peter or Apollos. At any rate this epistle is of a high order of inspiration and has the rare excellence of saying great things in plain words, equally profitable to scholars and to country labourers.¹

The epistle of S. Jude opens thus:

'Jude, servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,

¹ J. B. Mayor has written a commentary on James (Macmillan, 1892; second ed., 1897) and another on 2 Peter and Jude (Macmillan, 1907) of great interest. He provides a feast for the classical scholar and the theologian, from which however far more than crumbs may be gathered by the plain man or the Gallio. Dr. Bigg's edition of 2 Peter and Jude has been already mentioned (pp. 60, 123). The Provost of Eton, Dr. Montagu James, has edited 2 Peter and Jude for the *Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges*. His large knowledge of out-of-the-way sources of Jewish and Christian theology gives this small commentary special value.

to the beloved in God the Father and the guarded in Jesus Christ, the called : mercy to you and peace and love be multiplied.'

Then the writer plunges into his subject. He was meditating, he says, an ordinary pastoral when news of assault (moral rather than doctrinal) upon 'the faith once for all delivered to the saints' obliged him to send this exhortation to strive in its defence.

Though his readers received full instruction when they joined the church (verse 5 ; compare 1 John ii. 20), he would remind them of the judgement on rebellious Israel and rebellious angels, on Sodom and Gomorrha.

Here too are rebels who, unlike the reverent archangel in church legend, blaspheme. Cain, Balaam and Korah were types of them. They are traitors in the 'love-feasts,' like rocks in the channels, like all the death in life which spoils nature's picture. Enoch prophesied of their ruin. Vile epithets are conglomerated upon them.

Let his own beloved people remember the warnings of the apostles of the Lord Jesus, and build themselves on their most holy faith, praying in the Spirit and keeping themselves in God's love and waiting for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, unto life eternal. Nor let them fail in charity toward their brethren. Some may be still kept safe; some pitied with holy fear and separated from their contagious sin.

The letter closes with doxology to God the Saviour through Jesus Christ the Lord.

Westcott and Hort mark the first verse as probably disturbed by some 'primitive error,' some corruption of the original Greek which goes farther back than any evidence we have for the text. But this epistle is rough throughout. The aberration from conventional correctness may incline us to believe it genuine, a real letter from the brother of the Lord.¹ Language taste

¹ Compare Gal. i. 19 : and for the effect of such a realisation of history see a sermon on that text preached before the University of Cambridge by the Bishop of Durham, February 23, 1919, and afterwards published by A. P. Dixon, Cambridge.

and style are certainly late. Faith is fixed and concrete. Consider the likeness and the difference between verse 5 and 1 John ii. 20: this may imply community of period and divergence of mind; or dependence on 1 John which the author had read. How different again are the tones in which S. Jude and S. Paul denounce evil, yet the Pastorals are not altogether unlike Jude. The use of Jewish legend has parallels in S. Paul but goes beyond him: late imitation would avoid this use.

Yet all is vigorous and loyal. S. Jude has furnished conservative orthodoxy with great watchwords. 'The faith once for all delivered' is not so deeply inspired a phrase as 'The spirit of truth shall lead you into all the truth'; but it is a text for heroes.

Anyhow Jude is earlier than 2 Peter: else what is left to S. Jude of his own epistle? Dr. Bigg laboured to show how Jude improves the looser language of 2 Peter in the passage common to both. We see what he means yet are unconvinced. Indeed it is impossible to read 2 Peter without feeling all but sure that it has been composed by some Christian of the second century out of Jude and 1 Peter, with shreds from popular philosophy, and an honest wish to drive apostolic precepts home to a forgetful generation. Not long ago a teacher of theology in Cambridge printed a short epistle in the style of S. Paul in order to shew his friends how S. Paul would have treated certain problems of church order: he certainly did not wish to be taken for S. Paul.¹

¹ The Bishop of Ely's article in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* on 'S. Peter; second epistle' leaves little room for doubt about the late origin of this epistle. The strongest argument against its being really S. Peter's is the refusal of the early church to accept it. Doubts indeed were felt about James, Jude and 2 and 3 John. But these doubts were of a different kind. Eusebius puts all five epistles into the class of disputed books (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 25) but he adds his own clear opinion against 2 Peter, whereas he speaks respectfully of James and in other of his writings quotes it as Scripture. Jude was received at Rome and Carthage in A.D. 200: 2 and 3 John were associated with

The *soi-disant* Simon Peter begins with rather a fine piece of theological rhetoric interweaving pregnant phrases from street echoes of the schools. The ladder of virtues (i. 5-7) provides a good series of texts for modern exposition, and was worked into his thoughtful Private Prayers by Lancelot Andrewes (i. 1-11).

Then (in the fashion we have already observed in Jude and 1 John) he reminds his readers of what they know, and declares that he, who saw the transfiguration, will continue thus to rouse their memory till the dawn of the advent shall rise in their heart; this last phrase containing an allusion which leads him to testify to the inspiration of ancient prophecy and to warn them that 'it is no subject for private interpretation' (i. 12-21).

Then (ii.) Jude is amplified adorned and purified from rude apocrypha. *Agapae* 'love-feasts' becomes *apatae* 'deceits,' and the sentence is modelled anew. All is rounded off with a proverb from Scripture and another from common talk which would cover the heretics with shame.

The last chapter begins with a reference to a former epistle (which must surely mean 1 Peter), and the idea of this secondary compilation is rather happily expressed: 'This is a second epistle I am now writing to you, beloved, and in these epistles I am waking up your ingenuous intelligence by way of remembrance.' He passes to the delayed, yet certain, advent day, and among much grandiose language strikes out a thought which makes us glad that the church of the fourth century preserved the epistle for us: 'New heavens and new earth according to his promise do we look for, wherein dwelleth righteousness' (iii. 13).

He adds his testimony to the letters of 'our beloved

1 John and the doubt about them was noted as a mere caution. But 2 Peter is not heard of (earlier allusions are very doubtful) before Origen, and can hardly be styled canonical till the fourth century. As for James we must remember that the question for these early critics would be whether it was written by James the brother of the Lord: the arguments adduced above in its favour would not count.

brother Paul,' which are, however, difficult and (like Old Testament prophecy) need instructed readers.

A farewell encouragement and a doxology to Jesus Christ the Lord and Saviour close the epistle.

Form, says Plato,¹ always follows colour, and as we read the New Testament from S. Mark to S. John we see that it illustrates the aphorism. But these two last epistles, Jude and 2 Peter, go beyond it. There is rigidity, then weakness: the creative vitality of the earlier books is gone. Well, at least we gain this from the melancholy of such a sunset: we learn to recognise the undetermined margin and the varying intensity of inspiration. The proper meaning of the canon of Scripture is the list. In the orderly west it took on a further meaning of the list of authoritative books. In the sense generally supposed now of an exclusive list of books with a unique inspiration only their own there never has been a canon of the New Testament: so at least thought Dr. Gregory.² For some centuries, at any rate 2 Peter, Hebrews, the Apocalypse and other books were excluded from the Bibles of many churches, while the epistles of Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, the epistle of Barnabas were in some churches included. 'Read what you like,' said the old labourer when asked what part of Holy Scripture he wished to hear, 'it's all true.' We feel the beauty of his faith but the pathos of it too. For all is not equally true. If the Old Testament is not understood to record a progressive revelation, not a little of it may mislead. If we put Mark xvi. 16 on the same level as 1 Cor. xv. 28 we shall not keep the proportion of faith.

And there is more than that. The sentence about S. Paul's epistles in 2 Peter is just. The glorious essence of S. Paul's faith is more than hard for average saints to make their own. Sometimes S. Paul says

¹ *Meno* 75C.

² See *The Canon and Text of the New Testament*, by Caspar René Gregory (T. & T. Clark, 1907), pp. 286 ff.

things which do not belong to that essence and we obscure the mind of Christ by taking these as infallible dogma. Sometimes he puzzles, and troubles those whom he puzzles, by the logical forms into which he throws his greatest doctrines: his doctrine of atonement for instance. This last class of difficulties is what really embarrasses a willing student. Much may be cleared up by more patient study. That logic of 'atonement' is easier when we realise that S. Paul's own key-word is 'reconciliation' and that the reconciliation is of man to God, not of God to man. But if obscurity remains, let the student turn from Paul to the Lord himself. 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many': 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' There is the heart of the atonement, and if the further explication for the brain confuses any one, let him rest in, or refresh himself for further effort of thought by returning to the simplicity of Christ.

Of course few can or ought to shirk renewed effort of thought: heart-devotion must have definite meaning if it is to grow and yet be still sincere. And this thought among others will some time rise: Why should salvation be only through the cross when our Lord in his Galilean teaching scarce seems to have said that? If a man live according to the sermon on the mount, and pray and hope according to the Lord's prayer, is he not a Christian? The answer surely must be that he is: he is a Christian of the same kind as many disciples were during our Lord's earthly ministry. To vindicate a place among their brethren for such elementary believers was part of Dr. DuBose's aim in *The Gospel in the Gospels*;¹ and the same plea has been very earnestly made by Mr. Coulton in *Christ, St. Francis and To-day*.² Mr. Coulton was moved to this by the Christlikeness outside the church which he found among

¹ See above, p. 131.

² Cambridge University Press, 1919.

the martyrs of the war. In the war, in its blood and fire and vapour of smoke God has terribly granted that fresh outpouring of the Spirit for which we had, with too little real thought, been praying; and some such simplifying of the broad test of membership in the church was perhaps part of the divine purpose.

And the discerning study of the New Testament, which spreads from the men of books to the artisans to-day, confirms the hope. S. Paul's is not the only form of the doctrine of the cross in the New Testament. However explained, it is still to be pondered on, that S. James writes a nobly Christian book with scarcely a word about that doctrine. But more important is this fact—does not discerning study prove it a fact?—that the great, if not the only test of churchmanship in the New Testament is the moral test. When heresies are opposed it is the moral effect of heresy that seems to matter. Only in the very latest books do we observe the beginnings of change in this respect.

Yet there is a New Testament beyond the Galilean Gospels. There is deep doctrine of the cross and of the person of Christ. That this proceeds from the living Christ completing what he said in the days of his flesh is a main lesson of the fourth Gospel. It is not likely that men endowed with reason will do without this all their lives. It is not easy to follow the example without support from the doctrine. And troubled consciences make theology. They seek the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world: they know that none cometh to the Father but by the Son.

Only, here again, the 'coloured' truth distributes itself in various 'form.' And discerning study of the New Testament compels us to reflect that the Son of man, the Son of God, the Christ who is all in all fulfilled, is recognised by some where we have not as yet been accustomed to suppose it, and that he finds his brothers, his complement or fulness, in alien hearts

which he knows how to win sooner than his church does. Of course this has long been in some sort allowed. The reformation idea of the invisible church was an attempt to meet the paradox. But how much farther goes S. John's doctrine of the Word who is the Way Truth Life. And in his Gospel this fearless conception of the universal Father's house, of which the boundaries are wholly spiritual, anticipates a unity which surpasses any unity the church militant has dared to seek. Yet the church militant is spiritual, and the Spirit rests not till all is spiritual, and is there any difference in the New Testament between 'spiritual' and 'moral' force?

In this last chapter we pause and look back upon our journey. The retrospect already begins to pass into prospect. If it were not so we should be trifling with a mere literary exercise. But we may hope we have not been trifling. Has it not become plain that the New Testament opens to us the springs of life? It is a record, but through the record our minds are opened to the present working of the Spirit which inspired it? The faith of the New Testament is never ended though it has been once delivered, at one particular and not to be repeated conjunction of events. We may go back to guard and to correct our body of doctrine. We may look back to the given model, the example. But the chief thing is to go forward, not by imitation, but in the same Spirit. We see that done within the New Testament itself, through S. Paul, the epistle to the Hebrews, S. John. The Acts shows how the whole church, the whole company of ordinary believers, were associated with the movement. And we see how surprisingly bold the movement was. Sometimes it was felt so at the time: there was strife. Sometimes development proceeded naturally and almost unperceived. But to us, as we look back upon it, the seeming changes are almost incredible to a freshly awakened historical imagination: only as we discipline

and enlarge imagination by getting it more facts, and realising that spiritual influences are facts, do we assimilate the truth, that the faith of the New Testament is directed to a real object, and that it went on, and will go on for ever, approaching its object more closely and transforming its vision more exactly into thought feeling and deed.

And it has gone on since those early days. The latest books of the New Testament shew decline; symbolic, it might seem, as though to warn us against externalising authority in a 'canon.' Presently we find fresh vigour of faith, not merely exercised in interpretation, but moving with the originality of the same Spirit. Origen and Alexandria; the many-sided activities of Greek thought which coalesced at last through the council of Nicaea; S. Augustine; the schoolmen; the reformation, are milestones in this movement. We may think ruefully of the loss which these advances involved. But can we, after due consideration, deny that there has been movement, that more of God has been revealed to man in the course of centuries? And secondly, do we not feel the same kind of loss with gain as we trace the unfolding of faith in the New Testament itself? Its date is so far away, its story is told so reverently, that the loss appears less gross: but think of S. Paul and the Judaisers, or the denunciations of S. Jude, and consider again whether appearances might not have touched us more sharply had we been nearer.

And now notice how in every case, within and beyond the pale of the New Testament, these movements of the Spirit have been connected with attention to the letter; as the fourth Gospel is largely an outcome of the study of earlier Gospels, a gathering together of all the apostolic teaching, a filtering in of truth that lurked in Hellenistic piety; as S. Augustine was the contemporary and friend of S. Jerome the textual critic, the translator of the Scriptures; as the reformation was coeval with the renaissance.

Origen says in his commentary on Romans that as for the oldness of the letter, there never was a time when it was new.¹ The business of the scholar is to renew the letter as it wears to deadness, and looking back on our present study we see how the letter has been renewed of late.

First think of language. When the Roman empire of the east was nearing its fall (1453) Greek scholars began to teach in the west, and in 1516 Erasmus' Greek Testament was published. For a thousand years the New Testament had been read in a Latin translation. The opening of the original was a revelation. That *poenitentiam agere* 'do penance' was really *metanoia* 'change of heart' is a type of this discovery of a forgotten world. Colet's lectures on S. Paul, the English Bible, the Cambridge Platonists, followed. A new idea came into theology, that the original intention of the apostolic doctrine, that the mind of Christ could be sought and found, and that the dogmas of Holy Church might be interpreted, her customs even corrected, thereby.

But quite as new a discovery has been made within our own memory and is going on still. Lightfoot's commentaries made New Testament Greek fresh and precise to men still living. It was delightful for a young man, trained in the classics, to work through one of those commentaries, and learn the unexpected capabilities of a language he had glanced at and supposed barbarous. Westcott pressed its niceties almost too far. Rutherford² foresaw its real position in the wide world of late Greek. And now the papyri have confirmed his foresight and are illustrating the New Testament on every page; its leading words such as 'saviour'; its ideas such as the sacraments. It is a

¹ καὶ ἡ παλαιότης δὲ τοῦ γράμματος οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε καινὴ ᾖ: see *Journal of Theological Studies* (October 1912), where Mr. A. Ramsbotham has edited this document.

² See his translations of Romans and Corinthians (Macmillan, 1900, 1908) and the preface to the translation of Romans.

pity that our Revised Version was made before very much had been done with the papyri. Yet even so, that version is very valuable. No other country has anything like it, except America which is associated with us in it; and whatever may be objected to its dignity, rythm and so on—these objections are often made too hastily—it is a trusty counsellor to scrupulous souls. Besides all this new light on the Greek side there is also the daily advancing study of Palestinian Aramaic which carries us beyond the Greek Gospels to the actual language and therefore the actual contemporary force of our Lord's own teaching. *Immo ad antiquissimam* said Lancelot Andrewes in the Jacobean controversy with Rome; 'Do we go back to antiquity? No, to the very springs of antiquity.' How far more exact a sense has his rhetoric now.

The indisputable merit of the Revised Version is its fidelity to the restored Greek text of at least the second century.¹ It may be possible presently to go back farther still, to disentangle processes of text from processes of composition in the Gospels, to get the final answer about the relationship of Alexandrian to 'western' text. But this can hardly mark a new epoch in the same degree as did the labours of the last century, culminating in the publication of Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament in 1881. The New Testament is unique in spiritual value because it so constantly keeps above the level of religious ideas which ordinary men and ordinary ages could imagine for themselves. But all the changes which were made in the Greek text during its transmission tended to reduce it to this level, to render the rare thought commonplace, the daring safe, the spiritual less unlike the material. Some examples of this degeneration have been noticed on earlier pages. Take one more. In Apoc. xxi. 24 we read that the nations shall walk in the light of the

¹ Compare pp. 139 ff., 152, 192.

heavenly city. But the late text fails in faith or charity—'the nations of them that are saved.' But the difference is not to be measured by collecting various readings. It will make itself felt as a generation grows up which has been wholly taught from a pure New Testament.

Then there is the historical criticism of recent years. This has put the New Testament into a larger setting. Sixteenth-century scholars began to recover what seemed the original intention of the apostolic words. But taken by themselves those words yielded too obvious a meaning. Men thought they understood as their fathers had never understood because it was easy for them to read the simpler faith into them for which their generation was wearying. Only of late, when a larger outlook on the past has disclosed its unexpected, its complex richness, has it become necessary to take third thoughts about this. The apostles and their Lord were not peasants, nor unlettered. Paul journeyed through a world which was seething with religious aspirations far keener than we ourselves are accustomed to entertain. He would be rash who limited the intellectual forces which played upon the production of the fourth Gospel. Here are but hints of probabilities many and far-reaching. What they point to is caution in measuring the profundity of gospels and epistles by what we think was likely in early stages of developing theology, or by our own capacities intellectual or emotional. It is often safe to allow a far more universal meaning to pregnant utterances than till of late it has been fashionable to suppose. This is a change of fashion that is likely to tell in the future. Some who read this book may think it too conservative about dates and authorships: it is reactionary, they will say. But in that respect it is not altogether out of step with the newer critics. About dates and authorships we do become less radical. The newer liberalism is in judging what truth those authors at that date may have had minds prepared to

receive. The faith of the New Testament may presently revive in a renaissance of interpretation.

And this liberal interpretation is largely due to our bringing more philosophy to bear. Few readers or writers care to claim philosophy. The right to do so would justly be refused to the writer of this book. But it is difficult to hit upon another name, and few thoughtful people are to-day quite without the thing intended by this use of the name. A chief reason for hoping for a renaissance of Spirit at this time through renewal of the letter, is the increasing diffusion of scholarship. In the workrooms of scholarship all becomes more and more specialised thorough scientific: superficial work is not tolerated. But many more classes of people are interested in what the scholars are searching for; many more in each class than used to be are interested; and very many of these are busy men with a keen sense of reality. Superficial entertainment is not what they will accept from the academic workers. They do not ask for scraps of information. They want reality as fast as scholars reach it, and they do not want the tentative pedantries through which most scholars beat their way to methods and ideas. These methods and ideas they would learn, leaving alone the niceties of language criticism etc.: and here too is a way of knowledge which itself is scholarly. Scholarship, not popular information is being diffused to-day. The professed scholars are improved by this: they are more robust and sensible than they were, their outlook (as they would themselves put it) is larger. And the other people are improved also. And the faith of the New Testament is more rightly understood.

It is much the same with philosophy. Philosophy is a scholarly common sense. A scholar cares about the best use of words and will not be content with careless talkers to say 'cynical' when he means 'ill-tempered' or to say that a result flows, or a reason causes. A philosopher cares about the reality of life

and tries to find out what does 'cause' things, and whether there are truths more true than words and pictures can adequately represent. Few indeed would like to call themselves philosophers, but how many pretend to some acquaintance with natural science; and (if accounts be true) it is hardly possible to meddle with the latest developements of science without being entangled in questions of philosophy. That is one reason, it would be tedious and not here in place to enumerate the rest, why the people are philosophic to-day, and why by wholesome reaction, the philosophers are humanists.

Long ago there was a school of New Testament criticism in Germany which was highly philosophic. These critics applied their philosophy too much from outside. They had their philosophic system ready and shaped their criticism to suit it. Hence they made mistakes and were at last discredited. To-day we begin to see that in spite of these mistakes they had certain ideas which do still and always will help us to understand the faith of the New Testament. And of late a newer philosophy, invigorated by diffusion and reaction, has been brought into criticism. It does not impose itself, it shapes itself in contact with the material which it penetrates. History too, psychology, natural science are fused with it. Hort, historian and man of science, was a philosopher after this kind and his Hulsean lectures and commentary on 1 Peter, shew what this philosophy may do for the interpretation of the New Testament. The Dean of S. Paul's is a great expositor of S. John and his (more learned) philosophy makes him so. Dr. Abbott would call himself—and no one with more right—a scholar, he would probably refuse to call himself a philosopher: yet his scholarship is informed by philosophy, and he too has opened new windows through which to look upon the broad country of S. John. Dr. Bethune-Baker is devoted to the study of doctrine, not specially to the New Testament. But every student of the New

Testament will be immensely helped by his philosophic honesty in *The Faith of the Apostles' Creed*.¹

This unprofessional philosophy invades every thoughtful mind and it affects all study of the New Testament. So it comes that we can take a more lifelike and consistent view of the course of apostolic theology from the Galilean Gospel to the epistles of S. Paul and the Ephesian Gospel according to S. John. So we are able to accept the apocalyptic exposition of our Lord's main Galilean teaching and recognise spiritual opportunity in the historical limitation. We can recognise again the propriety of the gradual correction of the primitive apocalyptic tradition as Galilean 'colour' is reduced to universal 'form,' and picture-language is thought out, is worked out in the school of life. We can understand this experience being known, really known, by the apostolic Christians as the working of the Spirit of the Christ, the Spirit of Jesus: 'really' known, for it is the very business of philosophy to prove the Spirit the one reality.

Or this may be put from another point of view. The earliest Gospels record the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth; facts of history. In the Christ of S. Paul, the Word of S. John, we have an idea. From the resurrection onward the New Testament is the record of the distinguishing between and the reconciling of this history and this idea. S. Paul, if we may interpret Galatians by Acts, began his new life with a vivid apprehension of the Lord Jesus as a person. There is no sign of his ever losing that vivid apprehension. Yet we do see the idea of the eternal Christ, the first-born of creation, the Christ that is to be, filling more and more of his thought. And though it is improbable that the no longer knowing Christ after the flesh of 2 Cor. v. 16 means ignoring the earthly ministry of the Lord, it is plain that he very seldom writes about it. The advent too, in which at first he longs so passionately to see his Lord, becomes more vague

¹ Cambridge University Press, 1918.

in its historical conception, as he serves and sees the idea working more and more widely in the world, and strips away the scenic trappings of traditional apocalyptic, till at last he reaches the *aphtharsia*, the thorough purging of all that is material, in Ephesians. S. John starts from the idea very absolutely in the prologue to the Gospel, swiftly transforms it into history, then into the one person of the incarnate Son of God. Then he, like his predecessors in Gospel narrative, tells the story of historic facts. Yet we feel in his story, full of humanity as it is, the persistence of the idea, and in the discourse of the last supper it is the reality of the idea that makes eternal life, and the communion of saints, and unity in God, so certain for us.

This twofold aspect of our faith still presents itself to us. We are even apt to see it as two, as alternative ways of believing. Or going still further, some choose one, some the other, and each denies to each the credit of belief at all. The empty tomb, or the presence of Christ in the Spirit; which of these does one or another of us cherish as the fount of faith?

It is perhaps hardly possible for any active mind or warm heart not to lean somewhat to the one side rather than the other. Attention to the New Testament itself might justify strong leaning in one or other direction. It would not justify condemnation of a brother's partiality, nor allow us to rest content with our own. For one thing consider this: could you be content with the idea, if it were not for the whole church guarding the historic fact for you, which you can therefore afford not to think about? And again: could you rest content with the history, if worship, brotherhood, work, suffering, did not transmute the past history into present feeling? But, besides such private considerations, the New Testament (as always) forbids unphilosophic partiality. The problem is never given up in the New Testament. Whether Paul or John, Hebrews or Peter or Apocalypse, each

writer always holds firm to both at once. Sometimes they seem to feel no difficulty; sometimes they are consciously attempting to solve it. But the mystery is always there. It never degenerates into an easy half view—a heresy. And the greatness of S. John is that he goes deeper than any other New Testament author in distinguishing and combining the parts and thereby enlarging the whole.

This is to be noticed. Both S. Paul and S. John move towards the synthesis by way of the inclusive deity of the Christ. We have seen that this doctrine was derived from the Jewish conception of the Christ. Our Lord prepared for its developement by his use of the title Son of man. We but dimly perceive the implications of that title in the Gospels: the disciples at the time can hardly have perceived more. But Paul and John reflect its light and bring it into clearness: Paul especially in Ephesians with its Christ all in all being fulfilled, John especially in the high-priestly intercession of John xvii. with its vision of unity in the Father of all believers through the Son. This developement of the primitive Jewish doctrine has been made possible by the incarnation. The Jewish doctrine was simple because it was vague. The sharp distinction created by the earthly historic life of the Lord Jesus prepared a new simplicity which will be always and inexhaustibly mysterious but never vague again: it is now the clear seen symbol or sacrament of God, of God not separate from life, but all in all. And while there is matter here for many branching thoughts, the immediate practical issue is this: men will realise more and more that it is through the manhood of Jesus that the Godhead of Christ must be sought and proved; and that it is through man's relations with his brother men that the presence and power of Christ must be experienced. *Deus est mortali mortalem adiuuvare*, 'Where shall God be found? Where mortal helps mortal.' That old Roman adage has, in fact if not by authority, been adopted by the church whenever

circumstances have revived its distinctively Christian instinct.

So it was when under stress of trial the epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse were written. The name of Jesus echoes through those books like a refrain; 'the Name' with its comfort sweetness compassion, its 'humanity.' Here begins that cult of Jesus, of 'the Name,' which recurs when men suffer and mortals need the help of mortals. So it was again for instance in England in the fifteenth century, after the long desolation of civil war. Then 'Jesus chapels' were consecrated: a bishop dedicates a college to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint John the Evangelist, and the glorious Virgin Saint Rhadegund, but means it to be generally known as 'Jesus College': a church is built in a Norfolk country parish, and over the porch in fine flintwork is set 'Jesus Nazarene.' And so it is again to-day. Criticism and scholarship—the renewing of the letter—had in part prepared for the recurrence by historical study of the Gospels. Mid-Victorian impatience with metaphysics; the revolt of a 'working class,' who were really suffering and really thinking, against a faith which seemed to them to give no daily bread and to desert the example of Jesus; here too was preparation. In one group of churchmen, lovers of medieval devotions and indefatigable in ministry to the masses of the poor and 'the submerged,' the cult of the Name was deliberately taught: in close contact too with the realities of sin these priestly men were far from doing this in a merely ritual temper; the compassion and the purity of Jesus was, as they proved, a power for salvation. And upon all this the war descended. For five years Jesus the compassionate high priest was needed sorely. Not only was he needed for comfort and sympathy in the obvious sufferings caused by pain and bereavement; even more in the problem of the morality of war, of the obliteration of moral boundaries which war in its course was evidently working, Jesus tempted in all points like men at war,

yet without sin, could alone show the way: abstract ideas, the omnipotence, the absoluteness, the self-limitation of God were manipulated in vain.

And now though war has ceased troubles press and threaten; all pointing to the necessity of finding God where mortals help mortals, all compelling us to a cult of Jesus which shall be no imitation of the past but original, as the 'sameness' of the Lord Jesus always is. In gospel study the last great impulse came through the opening of the apocalyptic view. That produced a great deal of controversy which led and still will lead to more exact criticism, to a brighter renewing of the letter; and out of this will come in due time something more of permanent spiritual worth; for that is the inevitable sequence. In the meantime the academic controversy and experiment is just that part of scholarship which the new diffused scholarship will let alone. But there is another part in which clearness has been already reached, and on this the world is ready to seize. For, spite of all the evil about us and within us, the world no longer lies wholly in the evil one but is not far from the kingdom of God. This already vital part of the recovered faith is the emphasis on the sermon on the mount, on the precepts of Jesus, which had so long been watered down in civilised translation, and which apocalyptic criticism translates so much more literally. A nation must henceforth resolve to be as good as a good man: so Mr. Clutton Brock saw early in the war. The only chance of escaping another war seven times worse than this last war lies in the nations of Christendom really making peace according to the principles of their Christian faith: so said Mr. Lowes Dickinson in 1917. And the good men must be as unworldly as Jesus commanded them to be, says the sinister voice of 'Labour' to-day. 'Labour,' that again is an 'idea.' As a mere idea it has much in it that is sinister, just as 'liberalism' 'socialism' have much that is timid and ineffective. This generation has the task of making history to meet and coalesce

with the ideas. And the history must be made after the example of the historic Jesus, by homely affections, unrewarded service, real sacrifice. In S. John's Gospel of ideas the homeliness of love, the sordid side of controversy, the ultimate tragedy, are worked out with more realism than in the unsophisticated history of the earlier evangelists.

After all ideas cannot be overvalued: the faith which leans towards the idea is the larger faith. We cannot reach the idea except through history, but history is merely chronicle till the idea informs it, till history itself becomes idea. There is a picture by Ford Madox Brown which seems to many people of a certain age a very great picture. It is at any rate inspired truly by the fourth Gospel. The Lord is washing S. Peter's feet. It is the moment at which S. Peter's first indignant wonder passes at the Lord's answer into wondering trust in the mystery of cleansing. S. Peter and his Master, the act of washing, the words and their effect; there is the foreground, something that sensibly happened at a particular moment in past time, yet abides here, a felt reality, present to all generations. The ten disciples at the table are removed by some device of perspective from the abiding scene: they are passing, as we look and think, into the shadowland of unrealised memory. The disciple whom Jesus loved, looking over the shoulder of S. Peter, stands recorder, uniting the unstable past with that 'eternal present' of his Gospel, transmitting history by and into idea.

So doubtless he fulfilled the purposes of his Lord who is the Word in being Jesus of Nazareth. It is one aspect of the Jesus-cult of these new days that we yearn to draw, all of us, together in the peace of the simple Gospel which was preached and understood in Galilee.¹ In one sense and with limiting conditions it is much to be hoped that we may do so. But the deeper unity will be the wider also. The 'Greeks who

¹ See above, Preface, p. viii.

would see Jesus' needed an interpretation of what they would see such as S. John presently gave them. Missionaries at Delhi know that such interpretation is needed in India still. In our own country there are many to whom the Gospel history cannot be read without disturbing their historical imagination: yet if they may brush details aside and press through Jesus to the Word they, as much as more concrete minds, 'know' the Father thereby. Many there are who feel like Martha about the resurrection; who cannot yield their reason to the arguments for such a 'personal' immortality as are proffered in the collection of essays on *Immortality* published a year or two ago;¹ who are moved indeed by the passionate rhetoric of S. Paul, yet cannot yield themselves even to that, still checked with misgiving at its too frank borrowing from the life of the senses. And to these the quietism of S. John brings certainty. An idea which is only abstract so far as it is freed from unessential details, an austere simplicity of depth instead of a naïve simplicity of imagination; that is what many are seeking to-day. When the confusion of a myriad troubled hearts subsides towards the centre, it seems likely that the new generation will find the teaching it specially requires in S. John. We are not quite ready for that yet. S. John has not yet (so to speak) been 'edited' sufficiently. We are still fluctuating round points of criticism, the renewing of the letter has to be carried farther. Or on the other hand will the common sense of faith complete the process sooner than critical scholars expect, sweeping aside so many doubts that do not matter, as the Spirit is reborn and we are content to 'know' what S. John knew and so to believe?

Taught by S. John we need not be afraid of losing what we call to-day the 'concrete.' That is assured in his central truth, the eternal life of Jesus Christ. The boundaries of the church, the forms of faith, the

¹ *Immortality, an essay in discovery*, edited by B. H. Streeter (Macmillan, 1917).

privilege of selfhood, may in our passage (even now and here) into eternal life be transcended, but while our life is in him and our faith directed through him 'unto God,'¹ all must be well.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
 My last thread, I shall perish on the shore ;
 But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
 Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore ;
 And having done that, Thou hast done ;
 I fear no more.

¹ See I Pet. i. 21 with Hort's note.

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